

AND
DISCOURSE
OF
JUSTIFICATION.

Wherein

This Doctrine is plainly laid down ac-
cording to the **SCRIPTURES.**

As it was Delivered in several **SER-**
MONS on this **SUBJECT.**

By *Samuel Willard*, Teacher of a Church
in *Dorchester.*

*Phil. 3. 9. And be found in him, not having
mine own Righteousness which is of the
Law, but that which is through the Faith
of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God
by Faith.*

*Hic locus in Theologia facile primarius, et
bisque maxime salutaris est, quo
to, adulterato, vel everso, fieri nequit
puritas doctrinae in alio loco reconditur,
aut vana Ecclesia consistat. Synops.
Theol. de Justif. p. 487.*

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To the Reader.

I may be thought a thing superfluous and altogether needless to trouble the Age with any thing of this nature, after so many excellent Treatises have been exhibited on this Subject: nor am I so much a stranger to my self, as to think that any thing of mine can make an addition of light thereunto.

I have only this to say, that the Doctrine it self is of such moment to be known by all Christians, that it must needs be the duty of such Ministers as would approve themselves to be Faithful, to be much in asserting and evidencing

To the Reader.

ring it to their Auditories, and labouring to establish them in the knowledge and belief of it: which I having accordingly endeavoured in the following Sermons, it found that acceptance in the Preaching, that I was desired to let it come abroad: and considering that the smalness of the Book might invite some to read it, that would not allow themselves time to peruse larger tracts on the Subject; or to be at the expense to purchase them: as also that the divers ways of handling the same Doctrine is found to be of profit, by reason of the various inclinations of men to entertain things, I was the rather willing to it, because I knew not but this also might possibly be of some service; especially, since in it I made it my endeavour to avoid all controversy or dispute, and laboured with all plainness to suite expressions to common capacities. I hoped it might on that account yield some advantage to more unlearned Christians, to whose perusal I do more especially recommend it. This I am fully perswaded of, that a right conception of the Doctrine of Justification, is of as great necessity

To the Reader.

*necessity to the making one a sound and
Stable Christian as any one thing in Reli-
gion: and if this small piece may anyway
be serviceable to the faith of any, I shall
not think my labour in vain; which that
it may, I commend it to his grace on
whom all good success depends,*

Who am the most

unworthy to be

called a Minister

of the Gospel.

S. Willard.

Phil. 3. 9

And I have a very great pleasure
in writing to you and in
receiving your letters. I have
been very busy lately but
I have managed to find time
to write you a few lines.
I hope you are well and
happy. I am very much
affectionately yours,
Your friend,
John Smith

Post office at 17

at 17

at 17

at 17

at 17

at 17

Phillippians III. IX.

And be found in him, not having mine own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.

THe Justification of a Sinner before God, is (as one great mystery of the Gospel, and Wonderment of Angels, so) that after which every one of the posterity of fallen men hath great reason to be earnestly inquisitive; it being the foundation of our present peace with God, and the ground of our appearing before him with joy in the great day of Accounts. How much *Paul's* heart and thoughts were taken up with this solicitude, the Text and Context will make to appear

appear ; for having told us how highly privileged he was, *verse 4, 5, 6.* and how willingly he parted with those privileges, *verse 7.* yea, and how resolutely he continued to despise every thing of his own, *vers: 8.* *beginning* : he proceeds to render the reason why he so did ; and that is drawn up in several particulars , and all relating unto Christ : *q. d.* I do ask this for Christs sake : there are therefore three ends here specified.

1. *To know Christ*, *vers: 8.* which knowledge he declares to be a very *excellent thing.*

2. *To be entituled to Christ, to win him, to get him for his own*, *verse 8.*

3. *To be found in him*, Text: *q. d.* that my relation to him may be real ; that there hath been a certain and unquestionable implanting of me into Christ ; not only such as will give me the denomination of a Christian among men, but that will prove me to be one of his in the day of judgment. And to let us see that it is no insignificant or mean design that he is so intent upon, he gives us an account of the advantage that he promised to himself hereby, or what benefits he expected to receive, as the fruits

of Justification.

of this interest in Christ, and these are three.

1. *Justification by Faith in him, Text.*

2. *Communion with him, Verse 10.*

3. *A Glorious Resurrection in the last day, verse 11.*

The first of these is that which is to be the subject of the ensuing discourse,

In the words of the Text then, we have presented to us,

1. An expression of Paul's great aim, viz. *to be found in Christ*; and this should be the reach of every one that would be a Christian indeed.

2. As an Exposition of what he means by this option of his, for a reason given of this desire, in the sequel of the verse: It is, *q. d. By being found in Christ*. I intend being interested in his Righteousness; or the reason why I would be upon trial found united to Christ, is, that I may have his Righteousness reckoned to me as mine own; that I may be acquitted and justified in the great day upon his account. The words there,

A Brief Discourse

therefore clearly held out unto us, the whole substance of the great point of Justification, or the way wherein a sinner comes to be justified before God, viz.

1. In general, he must be found in Christ :

2. More specially or explicitly :

1. He must have a *Righteousness* for the matter of his *Justification* ; as appears in the setting of an affirmative against the negative : *not having mine own, but, &c.* one is denied or removed to make way for the other.

2. This Righteousness which he is thus solicitously reaching after, is expressed,

1. Negatively, *not mine own Righteousness, which is of the Law.*

2. Affirmatively, *but that, &c. i. e. The Righteousness of Christ*, whose Righteousness is to be looked upon as the *Meritorious* and *Maternal Cause* of our *Justification*.

3: The Author of this Righteousness is here

of Justification.

here declared, viz. *God, the Righteousness which is of God*;

4. The instrument of our Justification by this Righteousness is declared, and that is *Faith, which is of God by Faith*, and the object of this Faith is also signified, viz. *Christ, through the Faith of Christ*.

By his *own Righteousness of the Law*, Paul intends his *Personal Righteousness*, performed by his own endeavours, and accommodated to the tenour of the Covenant of Works. By the *Righteousness which is of God*, he intends both that which God hath devised and procured for us, and confers upon us freely, and that also which was wrought by a Divine Person, even the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father: By the *Faith of Christ*, he intends not the Faith which Jesus Christ exerted, or his personal and inherent Faith, but the Faith which both hath the Lord Jesus Christ for its object, and also flows from or is wrought by Christ, as the efficient of it in us.

What further explication the words may require,

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require, will be taken notice of in the prosecution of the Subject.

I shall not take up all that might be observed from the words, but endeavour to pick up something out of them, which may lead us to that which I intend, viz. a little enquiry into the great Article of Justification : **Hence,**

DOCTRINE,

That Justification of a Sinner before God, is not from his own legal righteousness, but from the Righteousness of Christ, freely imputed by God, and received by Faith.

That Paul is here speaking of Justification, is very plain and evident; for he fully describes to us the quality of that righteousness which he would appear in before Gods Tribunal; and no other reason can be rendered why he should be so careful about his Righteousness, then, but upon the account of his standing justified, and escaping of Condemnation; nay, though he names not the

of Justification.

the word, yet his terms are the very description of Justification by him else where,

In the opening of this great Truth, enquiry may be made into these things:

1. What is meant by Justification?
2. That it is impossible that it should flow from our Legal Righteousness.
3. That it is derived from the Righteousness of Christ alone.
4. That it is freely imputed by God.
5. That it is received only by Faith.

I intend not here any Polemical, but only a Doctrinal Discourse.

The point of Justification is a main Article of the Christian Religion, and that which principally gives us light into (yea wherein mainly consists) the difference between the Law, and Gospel Covenant; one therefore calls it, *Articulus stantis et cadentis Ecclesiae*; and upon this account it hath been most of all battered by Satan and his Instruments, and made the apple of contention, and ball of controversy in many Ages; there is therefore need of the greater care to be well established in it, and rightly

built

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built upon it; and indeed I cannot see how Christ can rightly be believed in unto Salvation, where this Article is either not at all known, or fundamentally mistaken.

I shall therefore endeavour to offer a brief Scripture account of it, and that with the greatest plainness, and accommodation of it as far as I can to the meanest capacities; and let it be attended with diligent heed, for it is our life; there is but one way for a Sinner to be Justified, and if he so mistake in that, as finally to come short of it, he must fall under everlasting condemnation, therefore it infinitely concerns us to take pains with our selves that we may come to be acquainted with it.

Here then, **Q. What is meant by Justification?**
Ans. To justify a man, is in Scripture sense, For a Judge to absolve a person from guilt, by pronouncing him Righteous. Now this sentence which is thus past upon the person, is his Justification properly. Justification is a word borrowed from Courts of Civil Judicature, and the right understanding of it is best attained unto by considering

considering of the allusion, and comparing it by these several steps that are taken in this process in order to such an issue. Here then these things may be observed.

1. That Justification presupposeth a *Legal Tryal*. The Apostle is here referring to the day of Judgment, and tells us that he would then be found in Christ, when he comes upon his last Tryal, that so he may be able to stand it out, and find an absolution at Gods Tribunal. If there were no Judgment wherein men are to appear, and give up their accounts, there would be no need of their Justification: but *Paul* lives in expectation of such a thing, and hath also given us to understand that all men have as much reason to expect it as he; it being a truth of which there is not the least ground to make any doubt, 2. Cor. 5. 10. *we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ*, Heb. 9. 27. *it is appointed for men once to die, and after that the Judgment*: Now if men must be judged, they must then first be tryed, how else shall a Righteous Judgment proceed?

2. That in this Tryal there is a question supposed; and this question must be, whether the man whocomes upon his Tryal, be guilt

ty of the breach of the Law by which he is to be tryed, or no. For all judgments must have a relation to some Law, which is to be the Rule of Tryal, and according unto which the man must be found guilty or not guilty. In order to such a proccs, it is requisite that there be a *Case* made, and this *Case* referred to, or examined and compared by the Law, and thus there must be an account taken of the person; and a distinct enquiry be made into all such matters as may be alledged either for or against him, hence that, 1 Pet. 4. 5. *Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge both the quick and the dead.* Giving an account, implies an examination of a case; and the question can be no other than this, *Whether the man be under the guilt of a breach of Law*, whether it have any such hold of him as to condemn him; or any thing wherein he is guilty to lay to his Charge; or whether he stands clear of it, and it hath nothing whereof to accuse him.

3. That Justification is properly the act of the Judge of the Court. The mans clearing must proceed according to his Sentence, and none can do it authentically but he. It will nothing profit the man that stands at the Bar, to have all the By-standers, when they hear his

his Cause pleaded, to declare themselves for him, and to say that it is good, innocent and faultless; all this cannot justify him, but his case is still depending until the Judge himself speaks, and his Sentence only determines it. Justification is an act of authority, Pilate speaks in the quality of a Judge, John 19. 10. *Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?* God only can justify a Sinner, for he is the mouth of his own Law, and reserves the dispensation of it to himself, and to his Son (who is also God) who acts by Commission from his Father, *all Judgment therefore is given to Jesus Christ*, and the exertion of it remains with him, John 5. 22. *The Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son.*

4. The proper essence of Justification consists in two things.

1. *The Absolution of the person from guilt.* Justification in this respect properly stands in opposition to Condemnation, which is the detaining of a person under guilt, and fastening of that guilt upon him, hence we have the opposition express, Prov. 17. 15: *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemn-*

neth the Just : Now guilt is properly an obligation binding a person over to suffer punishment for some Transgression which he is fallen under ; Condemnation is a passing of a Sentence formally upon such an one, adjudging of him so to suffer : and there is only this difference between these two, guilt proceeds immediately from the Law, and is the Sentence of that ; Condemnation is the Sentence of the Judge, and proceeds from him, as one that hath the power in his hand of putting the Law in execution. Hence, Justification in reference to this, is the denial of any such obligation, or the Judges freeing of the person under Tryal, from the Law, a delivering him out of its hands, a removal of condemnation from him, so Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore no more condemnation to those that are in Christ* ; it is a pronouncing the person not guilty ; and hereby he sets the person out of danger of being hurt by the Law, and that by an *authoritative* declaration, signifying that upon tryal and through examination of the case, the Law hath nothing against him who hath *done nothing worthy of death or bonds*.

2. *The pronouncing of him Righteous* : I therefore name this as a distinct part of justification

tification from the other, because, though it doth contain that under it, (for if I do declare such an one to be righteous, I do necessarily and by consequence affirm him not to be guilty, because righteousness and guilt are inconsistent) yet there is here something more in it ; for there is not only a negative Righteousness consisting in innocency, (which in some cases is enough to free a man from condemnation among men) but there is also a positive Righteousness required in the Law of God, and it was the condition of a glorious reward ; and this is a part of our Evangelical Justification, or it is contained in the Sentence of the Judge, that we have this positive Righteousness ; not only that the man is not worthy of condemnation, because he hath not broken the Law, but that he is worthy of life, because he hath kept it, see *Rev. 3. 4. They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.* And though the former of these doth most properly answer the import of the word, yet because they are both inseparable each from the other, and also each of them is imputative, they are therefore suitably looked upon as the constituent parts of our Justification,

How much this manifestly differs from Sanctification, (though by some they are confounded) might largely be made to appear, but it is needless here to insist, only in brief, the one is imputed, the other is inherent; the Righteousness of the one is in Christ subjectively, of the other in the Believer; the one is an act, the other is a work; the one a judicial act, the other a Phisical work, the one works a Relative, the other a substantial change; the one is perfect at once, the other gains its perfection by degrees; the one dischargeth a man from guilt, the other frees him from pollution; the one declares him righteous, the other makes him holy; and thus briefly for the thing which we are enquiring after, *viz* Justification, according to the right notion of it.

2. It follows to make it to appear, *that it is impossible that our Justification should flow from our legal Righteousness*: and in order to the making out of this assertion, we may for an introduction, first enquire what is meant by our Righteousness of the Law, and then what it is for our Justification to flow from this Righteousness: And here,

1: Our own Righteousness of the Law intends *any thing that is done by us, whether it spring from a principle of common Morality, or be performed by the vertue of special inherent sanctifying grace*: Paul in this Text hath an eye unto both these, for we have him renouncing of the former in *vers. 7.* and undervaluing of the latter, in *ver. 8.* whatsoever personal act or work of Obedience we do, whether in our state of unregeneracy or of Regeneration, as it is a work, and bears a respect unto the Law of God, is called our Righteousness, in opposition to the Righteousness of Christ.

2. For our Justification to flow from this, is as much as *that this should be the matter of our Justification*; or that for; and in respect of which the Judge is to pass a Sentence upon us according to the tenour of the Law; or that this should be the ground and reason of the Sentence which he passeth upon us: for otherwise, there is no scruple to be made but that every true Believer doth sincerely desire to be found in a Righteousness which is according to the Law of God, and to be full of good works: *he would be sanctified throughout, and perfectly conformed to Gods holy*

holy Will, he makes it his study every day to live unto God, and desires to be found so doing when he shall be summoned to appear before his judge: but he hath no mind to be found in it as his trust- his reliance, that which he would be tried by, and stand or fall according as it shall be found.

Now that this cannot justify us, or be the matter of our justification; or that our inherent Righteousness and good works proceeding from it, will not merit and procure this for us, is the thing to be evidenced and will appear if we lay together these conclusions following.

1. *That God in the Justification of a Sinner acts the part of a Judge, and justifies the sinner judicially, or as a righteous judge, i. e. he doth it in the way of a process, and upon tryal, and according unto equity: He doth not act the part of a Father in this case, who may connive at, pity and overlook faults and weaknesses in his Child, but of a judge that takes the Law for his Rule, and cloaths himself with Righteousness as a garment: Thus is the Relation which God stands in unto man according to the tenour of the first Covenant, and the respect which his*

condition bears unto it; for under that Covenant every sinner stands until he becomes a believer, and from which [believing] he must be delivered by this act of justification, and that in such a way as the Law may not be violated, or any injury be offered to it; but the sinner must be fairly discharged from it.

Now in a Judge it is requisite.

1. *That he be of a discerning eye;* That so he may be able to see into the whole case, to state it right, and to understand the true and full sense of the Law which refers to it, and to compare the matter of fact with the mind of the Law, that so he may not miss it in his final determination; for the justice or equity of the conclusion hath alwayes an inseparable dependance upon the premises; and such God is declared to be, *Psal. 11. 4. His eyes behold, his eye-lids try the Children of men.*

2. *That he be impartial in the Examination:* That he do not willingly, purposely, or negligently overlook any thing that is of the least moment in the case, but search into all matters to the very bottom: that he be not bribed or blinded, and so induced to connive or wink at any action, or let slip any evidence
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for favour or affection; but laying aside all undue favour or respect of persons, to keep to, and thoroughly survey the case, and lay it open in all its true colours, and cease not till he comes to the full knowledg of it: thus *Job* saith he did when he was a Judge, *Job* 29.16. *The cause which I knew not I searched out*, and this the Apostle ascribes to, or asserts concerning God, *Rom.* 2. 11. *for there is no respect of persons with God.*

3: That he be just and righteous in passing the sentence, after he hath taken an account of the whole case: That he condemn not the innocent, nor justifie the wicked; *Solomon* acquaints us that both of these are an abomination unto him, *Prov.* 17.15. and if he hates these things in others, we may be sure that he will not do them himself; nor is he indeed worthy to be acknowledged a Judge, that doth not make it his business in matters of judgment to administer impartial Justice, hence that in *Gen.* 18.25. *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* and the conclusion that follows from hence is, that in a legal Justification, the person justified must be without fault; or he must be first justified by the Law, before he can be so by the Judge: all this therefore is requisite to the Justification

tion of a Sinner according to the Law of God.

2. Hence it follows, that if a man be justified by his own righteousness, there must necessarily be these two qualifications found in it, viz.

1. *That the actions and works themselves by which he is judged be found perfect: not only to have some conformity to the Law, that will not be sufficient, but they must exactly and fully quadrate therewithal: they must be thoroughly righteous, and they must not be chargeable with any defect, they must not in the least point fall short; but being laid by the rule of trial, they must answer it in all its dimensions without any the least imperfection, for the Law will not lose one tittle of its own; Mat. 5. 18. One jot or tittle of the Law shall not pass till all be fulfilled.* that is accusation enough against any for God to have to say to us, *Rev. 2. 2. I have not found thy works perfect before God: There must therefore be discovered in them, not only the matter of a duty complete; but also that love to God in it which is required, and that is with all the heart, and soul, and strength and might; and the least degree wanting in it of this, will bring it under a censure, and make it, when weighed in the ballance, be found too light,*

2. *That*

2. That the person thus tried, be not found guilty of transgression in any other points of the Law; or at least that full satisfaction hath been made by him for every such default: There must be no Debts standing out, no arrearages unpaid: for upon the presumption that there be many perfectly good deeds done, yet if there be other deeds that have been faults, or faulty, the Law will not bate them: if a man hath kept the Law in every other point but one, and that one be alledged against him, he cannot be justified; for if he have not persisted in all, it declares him to be accursed, Gal. 3. 10. *Cursed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the Law to do them*: Hence we have that plain assertion of the Apostle James, Jam. 2. 10. *Who-soever shall keep the whole Law, and, yet offend in one point, is guilty of all*: and therefore if no reparation be made he is unjustifiable.

3. That Justification is properly one entire and perfect act, and therefore must needs flow from an entire and perfect principle. My meaning is, that it must proceed from the whole case, as it is taken together, and not separately. Justification doth not divide, and say thus far the man is righteous, only herein he is something defective; but it layes the whole state

state of the case together, and in one single sentence it saith, either that the man is righteous, or that he is unrighteous. It is not to be denied that in the sentence past for Execution, there is respect had to the offence, and according as it is aggravated, accordingly the doom is more moderate or more severe, so that there are different degrees of punishment; but as to the mans state, upon the cognizance taken of the whole, he is alwayes either acquitted or condemned; if acquitted he is thoroughly absolved from the Law, if condemned, the Law takes hold of him: Here then it is to be observed as a necessary conclusion, that Justification requires the whole case to be good, whereas unto Condemnation, one Article proved against him is sufficient, as Jam 2.10. forecited; and the reason is, because Justification is of the person who expoileth himself to the Law by one delinquency.

4. Hence it will appear that mens inherent Righteousness, or legal, and the exercise of it, cannot justify them, if we shall consider,

1. The imperfection of mans Righteousness; though he be a Believer, and consequently sanctified by the Spirit of God: evangelical-ly indeed he is lookt upon as one that cannot
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sin, 1 Iohn 3. 9. He cannot sin because he is born of God. But yet at the same time legally, he doth nothing at all that is righteous, i. e. perfectly and entirely, according to the extent of the Command; and there need but these two things to be thought of sufficiently to make this evident, viz.

1. That the Command requires constancy in obedience: He that will be justified by the Law, must never transgress it in thought, word or deed; no one failing in all his life must be able to be laid unto his charge: but it is a great Truth concerning all, even the most Holy of the People of God, that in many things they offend all, Jam. 3. 2. The just man falls seven times; the best have had their failings and short comings, it is the Wisemans demand, Prov. 20. 9. Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin? and the Apostle John with confidence lays down the Assertion, 1 Iohn 1. 8. If we say we have no sin we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.

2. The Command expects perfect obedience; i. e. that every act of obedience do fully come up to the height of what the Law requires, that there be no flaw or defect in it, whereas
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the people of God are perfect in no one act; Believers indeed are sincere, and that sincerity is accepted as evangelical perfection; but as for a legal perfection, which properly consists in a coming up to the full of the Laws demands, there are none in this life are so far recovered as to be able to attain thereunto; we have *Paul* himself lamenting of his own grievous imperfection, *Rom. 7. 18, 22, 23.*

2. *The severity of the Law*: It is an unchangeable Rule of Gods proceeding with the reasonable Creature, it is that for obedience unto which (and thereby to glorifie God) Man was made, and by which he must be judged at the last: Now this Law will have both Obedience and Satisfaction, or else it will never acquit and justifie us: but man can do neither of these. That he cannot legally obey, hath been already made to appear; but the Law will not release him from that obligation: neither yet can he make satisfaction for his defaults; none of *Adams* race can clear themselves from having been Law-breakers, and they have no recompence to make for the wrongs done to it by this transgression of theirs; *thousands of Rams* will not do it; *a whole World* will not be taken in *Exchange*, *Mat. 16. 26.* and

as man is not able to satisfie, so till satisfaction be made; the Law cannot, will not give him an acquittance; if once it layes the Debtor in Prison, there is no hope of a Goal-delivery till the last mite be paid, *Luk. 11. ult.*

3. *The Justice of God*; by vertue whereof he neither can nor will condemn the Righteous, or acquit the guilty: he declares that man, that earthly Judge, that doth so, to be an abomination in his sight, *Prov. 17. 15.* and denounceth a Curse against any such one, *Isai. 5. 23.* which justifie the wicked for a reward, &c. he must and he will do that which is right. If he justifieth any person, the Law shall justifie him; he will not pervert the Law nor wrest Judgment; and if the Law justifieth it shall find the person perfect, free from any guilt, perfectly righteous, fully conformable to it in all things. But when God comes to judge men; he finds none of this perfection in their righteousness, but manifold defects, and therefore, for, or upon the account of these he cannot justifie them; he cannot in truth declare that he hath found the man righteous, that he hath seen no iniquity in him, that all his works are right before God; hence therefore, we shall find the Psalmist deprecating this kind of Judgment

or manner of proceeding, *Psal. 143. 2. Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh be justified: he knew that upon a strict Law Tryal, the case must needs go against him. God is a God of Truth, and therefore as he weighs all the actions of the children of men, so he will declare concerning them, according as he finds them, and no otherwise: and upon this account we shall find Pauls conclusion to be full and positive, and universal, against all hopes of ever obtaining our Justification in such a way as this is, Rom. 3. 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one: So that the conclusion stands, that our works cannot be the matter or meriting cause of our Justification: they must altogether lye by, and either we must find it somewhere else, or otherwise we must for ever despair of obtaining so precious a priviledge as this of Justification is: but such is the wonderful kindness of God to the children of men, that though they can find none at home yet it is to be had from abroad; and therefore,*

3. It follows that I make to appear, *That the Justification of a Sinner flows from the Righteousness of Christ, and that only.* And
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for a more through discovery of this, there are three things to be distinctly enquired into, viz.

1. How Christ's Righteousness merits our Justification?

2. What Righteousness of Christ is to be accounted as the matter of our Justification?

3. The ground of the necessity of this Righteousness of Christ for our Justification?

1. How Christ's Righteousness merits our Justification?

A. Let me here premise this, That by meriting or deserving, I intend a Covenant Merit, or a coming up to the terms of the Covenant, according to which men are to be justified or condemned; that which fully satisfies the demands of the Law of the Covenant, upon our account, doth properly Merit for us; for a Covenant merit is nothing else but a fulfilling of these Covenant Conditions upon which the promises of it depend: Now every serious soul would willingly be satisfied upon this account, he would be informed in this point, how the righteousness of one can answer for another who hath none of his own; yea, how one mans Righteousness can deserve Justification for a great many, who

who are themselves sinners: and there can be no rational settlement of the soul in quiet and comfort, without some good satisfaction in this point: And let me answer this,

I. *Negatively*. It doth not proceed from the Righteousness of Christ barely considered as the Obedience of a meer man to the Moral Law: For,

I. *If Christ had been a meer man, or only an humane person, he had owed all his active Obedience to the Law for himself, or upon his own account.* The law of nature obliged every meer Son of Adam to full, perfect constant obedience to all the commands of God and when he had done all, he had done but his duty, and could have challenged the Covenant reward for none but himself: it is but a just debt which every man owes to God, to love him with all his heart, Soul, strength and might, and his neighbour as himself, Mat. 22. 37, 38. and if Christs humane nature had been a person by it self, this had been his case, he would have had so much work to do upon his own score, that he would have had no room to have done any thing for any else besides himself.

2. Neither could the passive obedience of a meer man be of vertue sufficient to satisfy for the offences of many. The eternity of sinners sufferings is a full proof for this, for eternal death is not a distinct sort of death contained in the curse, but only an accidental continuance of the other; for if Justice could take satisfaction of a meer creature in any measure of time, there would be good ground of hope that the damned might at length have a Joyl. Delivery; for Justice requires no more then satisfaction, though it will have that to the utmost, *Luke 12 ult.* and because it cannot take it in measure upon a finite creature, it is necessarily compensated by the duration; so that if Christ had been a meer man, though he should have died for our offences, yet he could never have risen again for our Justification, but must have been detained an eternal Prisoner, and never have crost the accounts, or taken out the acquittance for his people.

2. *Passively*, there are three things which go in to make up the merit of Christs Righteousness for sinners.

1. The Righteousness it self which he hath performed in Obedience to the Law.

2. The

1. The person that performed it.
 2. The Office which this person sustained in this performance.
 3. The Righteousness itself which is requisite for our Justification, must be that which fully and in all the parts of it answers the terms of the Covenant which was between God and man in the first. The Law of that Covenant was the rule of Justice and Righteousness between these two parties: and he that will either do or suffer upon the account of another, must come up to the whole of that which he was himself to have done or suffered: he that undertakes to pay a Debt for another, must either take care to pay the whole Debt, or else, by leaving any part of it unpaid, the man is still obnoxious to his Creditor: and if this be well considered, it will thence be apparent, that both Christ's active and passive obedience were needful in this case, and no more than what was really requisite; and if he had not so obeyed, he could not have perfectly merited for us; for Covenant-merit is nothing else but the performing of the Articles of the Covenant: and therefore Paul resolves our Justification into the obedience of Christ as the procuring cause of it, and that both his active obedi-

dience, Rom. 5.19. *As by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous:* Now was Adam's active disobedience which made men sinners; And his passive obedience, 2 Cor. 5.21 *For he hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* For though it be a truth, that God in his absolute Sovereignty might have dispensed with and given a pardon to sin freely; and without any satisfaction, upon man's submission and repentance, the punishing or pardoning sin belonging to his efficiency, and flowing therefore from his will or good pleasure; and though he might have given happiness without consideration of any active obedience, if it had seemed best for him so to have done; yet when God hath once entered upon this with his creatures, and engaged himself in such a Covenant, as infinite wisdom had suited to his own purposes for the displays of his glorious Holiness, Justice, and Grace, he now occupies the place of a righteous Judge, and cannot dispense with his own Law, because his Truth and Righteousness engage him to it: Christ's Obedience therefore was perfect and full, it answered the Law in the whole substance of it, he both did all that was required, and suffered all that

that was denouced, be fulfilled all Righteousness, Mat. 3. 15. all this was necessary, but considered alone it was not sufficient, there must be something more to render it meritorious; consider therefore,

2. The person that did all this, and that was no other then the Eternal Son of God in our nature. If it had been any other kind of person, it would have yielded us no comfort; for what if his Obedience had been perfect; yet if not extensive, what advantage could there have accrued unto us from it? but when we look upon it as performed by such an one, that renders it not only right for the kind, but also valuable; or of sufficient worth to answer the end for which it was done, and that will be evident if we consider what each nature contributed to it, and put both together; For,

1. The Humane Nature which was assumed by the Son of God, made him one answerable to the Law. The Covenant was made with man, the Obedience due to it, was required of man; and therefore it must be a man that must do and die; no other kind of being, no not an Angel, would have sufficed, or answered the Covenant, the Son of God therefore

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therefore became a man, assumed a true humane body, and a true reasonable soul, was the Son of David; the word was made flesh, John 1. 14. and by this way he was fitted to be under the Law, and responsible to it, upon our account, and therefore the Apostle puts them together as things inseparable, Gal 4. 4. *made of a woman, made under the Law*; for as if he had been a meer humane person he could not have sustained the place of a surety for us, so except he had taken our humane nature, he could not have done the work of a surety upon our account; Paul therefore puts a great deal of weight upon this consideration, Heb 2. 16. *for verily he took not on him the nature of Angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham*; we must therefore study the Incarnation of Christ, if we would be clear in the nature of his merits.

2. *The Divine Nature which assumed the Humane into his Person, put an infinite virtue, and value into his Obedience*; for the humane nature losing its Personality in the person of the Son of God, hereupon all the Righteousness which he performed is accounted (and that properly) the Righteousness of God, and that is one reason why it is so called in our Text, and 1 Cor 5. 21. it is not of God only because

he ordained it, nor yet because he did accept it of his hands, but mainly because the person that did it was God: upon this score also is his blood called *the blood of God*, Acts 20. 28. *The Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood*, and hereby it came to pass that the Obedience of Christ was of greater worth by far, than the Obedience of all the world could have been, because he was a Divine Person that did it: and from hence it came to pass that there was enough in it to merit for a great many, even a whole world, *the blood of Redemption* is therefore called *precious blood*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. and there we have found a valuable price to merit, that which hath in it enough to answer for the Justification of Sinners, but still this added to the former yet falls short of the actual meriting of it, there is yet something more wanting, but that also is supplied by Christ, hence consider.

3. *The Office of this person, and that was Mediatorial*, see it expressed in 1 Tim. 2. 5. *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*. It was the Office of a surety that he bare, and therefore he is so called, Heb. 7. 22. he was set up, and anointed unto that very business, that

that he might reconcile God and man again, whom the Sin of man had separated each from the other. So that *Jesus Christ neither lived for himself, nor died for himself*, but he went through both for us, and that as he was constituted a *Mediator*; and that is that which properly rendred his work of Obedience Satisfactory and Meritorious, which otherwise would in no wise have turned to our account: So that in Christ we are not only to consider his personal fitness to be a Redeemer, and to satisfy Justice fully for us, and that he was made man, and took our nature upon him, and was compleatly furnished with all these graces in his humane nature, whereby he was carried through the work which he was engaged in: but we are also to eye his deputation or appointment to this work in the Covenant of Redemption, which pass between his Father and him in the days of Eternity, and in the consideration of that Covenant we are to observe these two things.

I. *What was done by God the Father in order to the bringing of it about*, and that was, he made a proposal of the work to him, and exhibited before him a promise of this reward on the condition of his performance of it; these

those are the words of the Father, *Isa. 53. 12* when he shall make his soul an offering for sin, his soul shall see his seed; and they are a declaration of the terms of the Covenant: the Apostle assures us that he took not this Office upon him without a special call given him unto it; *Act. 5. 4, 5.* and there was a great deal of reason for this; for fallen man was Gods Prisoner, and it was at his pleasure whether he would accept of an atonement for sinners at the hand of another in their behalf. It was not a matter of meer Debt, where if the money be paid, the Creditor hath no reason but to be satisfied, and cannot trouble his Debtor any further; but the case was properly Criminal, man had forfeited himself, his life to divine Justice, and it lies in the breast of the Judge whether he will take another in exchange to dy for him, and let him go free; if he refuseth such a Ransom, and resolve that he who hath offended shall in person suffer the smart of it, none can lay injustice to his charge: if therefore there had not been an agreement about this between the Father and Son, there had been no efficacy of it.

2. *What was done by Jesus Christ in the performance of it; and that was, he both under-*

took the work, and went through with it: he accepted the offer and condition that was proposed to him, and did all that was required on his part for the purchasing of this benefit, *Psal. 40. 7, 8. Then I said I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will* *Ob God!* *Phil. 2. 7, 8. He made himself of no reputation, &c.* So that in this way God made himself a Debtor to Christ by a free promise, that he would justify all such for whom he should make satisfaction, and that his righteousness should stand for their justification, *Isai. 53. 11. By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many.* And thus by this Covenant, the righteousness of Christ came to be, not only equivalent in vertue and worth, but the very actual price of the ransome of Sinners, *1 Tim. 2. 6. Who gave himself a ransom;* and Christ not only virtually but actually, properly, and according to Covenant, merited the pardon of sin and life eternal for all of Gods Elect; he is therefore said to purchase them with his blood, *Act. 20. 28.* and his Death is called a Ransom, *Mat. 20. 28.* and a Propitiation, *1 Joh. 2. 2* and Christ is said to be made of God unto us, our Righteousness, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* In a word, if Adam had compleatly obeyed the Law, though there were no proportion between the

the work he had done, and the reward to be enjoyed, yet he had merited by Covenant; so, much more the Lord Jesus Christ, having done and suffered that which was virtually meritorious for us, and doing this under a Covenant of Life, he must of necessity merit it for us: so that all his redeemed ones are worthy to live, in as much as he hath bought their lives for them, and fully satisfied the justice of God upon that score: and thus we have a brief account of the way in which the Righteousness of Christ merits our Justification.

2. *What Righteousness of Christ is accounted as the matter of our Justification?*

A. Though (as we heard) there was required to the making of Christs Righteousness meritorious, not only the work it self, but the person also that did it, and the office by vertue whereof he did it; yet we are here to consider, that the thing which is applied to us for our Justification, or that which God tryes us by when he justifies us, and in which he finds the ground or reason for his so doing, is only *the righteousness it self which this person by vertue of his Office did perform*: That therefore which is applied to us, and by which we are justified, is the whole mediately Obedience

Obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, both active and passive. Whatsoever the Son of God in our nature either did or suffered, either in his life or death, or throughout the whole state of his Humiliation, wherein he was considered as standing under the Law, and (as so) acting for us; goes into the righteousness of his which is by God accepted for us, and is reputed as our righteousness: this is that which God looks upon as he is the Judge, when, and for which he pronounceth us righteous.

For a more distinct clearing up of this, let us here consider;

1. *That the whole active and passive Obedience of Christ was requisite to our Justification;* we stand in need of them both, and this will appear undeniably if we observe,

1. *That it is the Justification of sinners that Christ stands engaged for;* so the Scripture calls it, Rom. 4. 4. *Believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly:* and this is a thing to be well considered, that when God comes to justify any person he is in himself a Sinner, an ungodly one; and the way how such a thing may be so fairly done, calls for a special consideration and enquiry: if the case were only for the justifying of a just person, one

to whose charge nothing could be laid, there would need no great ado for that: his own righteousness would stand up for him, it would plead his innocence, challenge the discharge of the Law, and his active Obedience were sufficient, for the man was never obnoxious: but it is another manner of thing when it comes to the justifying of a condemned sinner, who hath transgressed the Law, and thereby incensed and opened its mouth against him; and here is a great deal more required to prepare the way that Justice may give such a man an acquittance: and as a sinner can have no righteousness of his own personal, so there must be a manifold Righteousness in him who will obtain this favour for him. Hence,

2. There are two things required to the perfect Justification of a sinner, viz. *There must be a remission of the guilt of his sins, and there must be the reputation of him as just before God*: for it is before intimated, that Justification absolves a person from guilt, and declares him righteous, and that according to the Law: and these two are inseparable, as being essential parts of Justification; and there is reason for it, because by Gods Law, no man can be declared free from guilt, ex-

Sept

cept he be found perfectly righteous, and that because it necessarily involves a man in guilt not to be so: For there is a guilt in omission as well as in commission; such are therefore pronounced accursed, Gal. 3. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them.

3. To each of these parts there is required an answerable righteousness. If man had never sinned, one righteousness had sufficed for him, and there had been no occasion for the other; but now he is become a sinner before God that will not do, but he needs a double righteousness: For,

1. In order to a sinners acquittance from guilt, there must be a Pardon procured for him, and applied unto him. This is a plain and known thing, that where offence or transgression of the Law hath gone before, there a pardon properly attends upon Justification, and he cannot be justified except the offence be forgiven: for the Law in its charging of sin upon him doth together condemn him for it, and adjudgeth him to suffer the threatened death: and till such time as that be suffered, either by himself, or his Surety in his stead, the Law is not satisfied, nor will ever give him

him acquittance: As for the prerogative which (among men) the supreme Judge assumeth to give a free pardon without satisfaction to one condemned by Law, it is a liberty which he enjoys above the Law, and there may be great reason for it in some cases: but this consideration hath no room in the present case, for God is resolved to proceed in all things according to the Law which he hath constituted; and this infers the necessity of the Passive Obedience of Christ, his Death, his Sufferings, his undergoing of all that which we should have undergone ourselves: thus the great Judge must have to look upon and regard in his setting of the Prisoner free, who was a lawful captive; and for this we read such expressions, *Isa. 53. 5. He was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed: and for this reason it is said, that he was made sin for us, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Now these sufferings that Christ thus underwent are the very matter of the satisfaction of the Law for sinners, that Righteousness which it accepts of upon this account, hence that in Rom. 8. 34. Who is but who condemneth? it is Christ that died.*

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2^d When a sinner is declared righteous, he is
together with it adjudged to receive the glorious
reward of Righteousness. Justification not
only exempts a sinner from hell, and wrath,
and eternal death, which he had been ob-
noxious unto, but it also appoints him to life,
and peace, and salvation; and this also must
be done according unto the tenour of the
Law. Now if we search, we shall find that
the Law of God propounded happiness to
man upon condition; it was to be the re-
ward of his keeping this Law, Rom. 10. 5.
Moses describeth the righteousness of the Law,
that the man that doth these things, shall live
by them. It did exact obedience of man as
a duty, and looked upon him as standing
under a bond, obliging of him to the perfor-
mance of it; and as he was to have no re-
ward of life, except he did so obey, so to
fail of or omit it was death; hence, as with-
out such a righteousness he cannot clear
himself of the threatening, but it will take
hold of him, and bring him under condem-
nation, so much less can he without it ex-
pect to receive the recompense of reward:
and this is that which is called active obedi-
ence, and this also must be performed either
by him or his surety, and because he herein
fails as much as he did in the former, and

as he hath not wherewith to satisfy for his offences, so neither hath he any strength to perform what is his duty, hence as Christ did fulfill all Righteousness, Mat. 3. 15. so he did it for us; his passive obedience was not only for us, and his active for himself, but both served to the ends of Redemption, and in whatsoever he was made under the Law, it was that he might redeem such as were under the Law, and makes them partakers in the Adoption of Sons, Gal. 4. 4, 5. his holiness of life did not only fit him to be an acceptable sacrifice for us, but it was also a part of his Mediatorial work on our account; and this is the very matter, of the Righteousness for which we are adjudged to receive a Crown of life, and so made heirs of eternal glory, according to the promise made in the Law Covenant on this condition.

4. Hence it follows, that the Law is upon this account said to be fulfilled by us in believing. Such an assertion we find in Rom. 8. 3, 4. God sending his own Son, &c. that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, and chap 10. 4. for Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth. Now this could in no kind sense be true, if it were not upon this account, viz. that

our Faith laying hold upon Christ, and clo-
sing in with him, doth, in so doing, embrace
and receive as our own, legally, or in point
of Law, the righteousness, which doth in all
respects and degrees answer the whole de-
mand of the Law from us; and that is both
active and passive obedience: for it is cer-
tain that believing is not it self the obedience
which the Law requires, and therefore it
must needs entitle us to something that is so,
else, though it might be looked upon as a
new condition of life, in a new Covenant,
yet it could not be accounted as the fulfilling
the condition of the old Covenant. In sum
Christ by doing of what we should have
done, and by suffering of what we should
have suffered, affords us something to take
hold of for our clearing, and the Law mat-
ter upon which to proceed to justifie us: for
we are as defective in doing to acceptance,
as insufficient for satisfactory suffering. Hence

2. *This obedience of Christ is in the Scrip-
ture reckoned to be the matter of our Justifica-
tion: those expressions do fully infer it, in
Rom. 5. 19. For as by one mans disobedience ma-
ny were made sinners, so by the obedience of one
shall many be made righteous. How is it possi-
ble that one man can be made righteous by*
the

of Justification.

the obedience of another, but only as his obedience is made ours in Law; or as when it trieth us, it doth it by his obedience, and not by our own personal? like unto this in that 2 Cor. 5. 21. *He hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might by made the righteousness of God in him.* How can we be made the righteousness of God in him, but by our having of his righteousness so looked upon as if we our selves had been the actual performers of it? and what else but this can the Apostle aim at in our Text, when he desires to be found in him, under the robe of his Righteousness, and not of his own, but that he would have that to cover his defects, and stand for him in the trial of the Law, and so become the matter upon which he is to be judged, and according to which the Sentence may pass?

3. Now let us a little consider and enquire into the ground of the necessity of our having the righteousness of Christ for our justification, and there will need no more for the making of this manifest, but only the laying together of these few following Conclusions.

I. That Justice as well as Mercy must shine out in the pardoning of a sinner, and pronouncing

of him righteous. God must be righteous or else not be God: there can be no unrighteousness at all with him. It is one of his inseparable Attributes: the Psalmist therefore acquaints us that these two Attributes of God viz. his Justice and Mercy do in the great affair of Man's Salvation meet and consent most harmoniously, *Psal. 85. 10. Mercy and Truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* As it is a truth that if God be not merciful the sinner cannot be pardoned, fallen man must be made a monument of mercy, or he must be forever hopelessly miserable; it is no less true, that if God be not just, he cannot be the Judge of the whole World, for Justice is absolutely requisite in him who bears the place of a Judge, *Rom. 3. 5, 6. Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: how then should God Judge the World?* and he tells us, *ver. 19. That all the World is become guilty before God.* Had God only intended the display of his mercy to mankind, it had been another case; but since there is his righteousness that must be signally made known, it is therefore necessary that where guilt hath gone before, there revenging Justice must take place, and prepare the way for mercy to display it self.

2. That God having entred into a Covenant with man when he first made him, he hath therein engaged his Justice to the confirmation and fulfilment of his part of the Covenant. It is one thing to say what God might have done by vertue of his absolute Lordship, and unconfined prerogative, if he had not voluntarily obliged himself in the threatening annexed to his own Command; and there in positively threatned man with death if he should disobey it; and another thing, what he will do when he hath so bound himself to the terms of a Covenant: Gods word is now past, he positively said, *Gen. 2. 17.* In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely dye. And his truth engageth him to see to the performance of his Word. One greatly mist it when she interpreted it to be only a danger, as if God had only said, *lest ye die*: the fall did not barely expose man to the hazard, but brought him under a necessity of dying; it not only made him obnoxious to Gods displeasure, if he should seem to sue the forfeiture, but it brought him under a full, firm, and engaged Sentence of death: and God must be true and faithful to his threatnings as well as his promises; with this the Prophet confirms the Sentence pronounced against Saul, *1 Sam. 15. 29.* The strength

strangers of Israel will not ly, nor repent, For he is not a man that he should repent. There is then no hope of mans escaping the righteous Judgment of God: he fell under the Law, and this great rock will grind him to powder, if there be no way to remove it off from him.

3. Hence man must of necessity have a righteousness to offer unto Gods Justice for his Justification, if ever he hopes to attain it; and not only so, but he must have such a righteousness as may in all the parts of it answer to the demands of the Covenant. For, without a righteousness to look upon, and proceed according unto, the Justice of God can have nothing before it which it hath any advantage to justify him by or for, and except this be as large and full as the Law requires, it hath not that in it which is sufficient to answer the end of it; as good none at all, as an imperfect one; for if it be found to have any flaw in it, then either Justice must connive, and give him some abatement, which it never will, nor were it Justice if it should; or else it must be rejected as a thing altogether insignificant; and so it shall, for, *for as much as the Law shall pass, will all be fulfilled, Matth. 5. 18.*

4. Though God hath positively engaged his Justice to require satisfaction for mans offences, yet and to stand upon punctilio's in the case; yet he hath not absolutely bound it to exact the satisfaction of the person himself who is the offender; or that it must be a personal satisfaction that is given, and no other: for, though it was not plainly express'd in the first Covenant, in so many words, nor had man any apprehension of any such thing, till God was pleased to reveal it to him, but fell under a fearful expectation of dying by the hands of God: yet it is certain that God did leave room for the interposing of a Surety, and the event, which is the best interpreter of Gods mind hath proved it to be so; for God hath accepted of one, which he would not have done over the head of his own Law; nay, it is certain that in that everlasting contrivance and engagement between the Father and the Son, there was a Surety laid in or provided, before this Covenant was made with Adam; and as Paul speaks, Gal. 3. 17. so may we a little varying of his words: (and for ought I know the Text may ultimately refer to it) The Covenant of works which was made with Adam in time; could not disannul the Covenant of suretyship which was made between God the Father and God the Son in the days of

of Eternity. Yea, and we may now find some tracks or footsteps of this Truth in the very nature of the first Covenant: it seems to intimate that there was some room left there for such a transaction by a surety, because God dealt with man at first in *Adam* as in a surety, and he it was that lost them; and all that ruine which is fallen upon his Progeny, refers to his first Transgression; hence therefore he might, for their recovery again, deal with them, if he saw meet in another surety, who should restore them: it is true, it was all his pleasure, and he was free in it; but the way was consonant to equity, and that he hath so done, himself hath made to appear, by bringing in of this new way of life; *Paul* makes a kind of parallel between these, *1 Cor. 5. 22. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive:* he is therefore called the second man, or second *Adam*.

§. This surety, if he will take off mans guilt, and render him just, must be able to do and suffer all that the Law requires: if he will acquit guilty man from his condemnation under which he is detained, and procure for him Eternal Life, which he hath lost, he must fulfil all the Covenant Articles for him. *Jesus Christ* therefore assures us that this was his Errand

Errand and work that he came into the world about, *Mat. 5. 17.* I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. Now this is a work that every person is not competent for, a province that any one cannot successfully undertake, it requires one that is of sufficient abilities, for it is not undertaking that will do, but it must be fulfilling: Justice is not so regardless of its own glory as not to be sure that the surety be sufficient and solvent, before it will indent for the delivering up of its Prisoner.

6. This is more than any meer creature can possibly do: there is no created being, that is such and nothing more, that is able to stand in the Judgment before God for sinners, and obtain their absolution. That man cannot by his own Righteousness obtain this for himself, hath been already proved in this discourse; that the whole Creation of second beings cannot do it for him, is as certain and undeniable; for (and there need no more to be said of them in this case) they are finite beings, and their Obedience but a finite Obedience, and of a limited virtue: the things of the world are of no value, thousands of rans signify nothing for satisfaction *Mic. 6. 6.* the men of the world are under the same

same condemnation, and need a surety, and so are incapable; the holy Angels onely remain, of whom this may be affirmed, that though they are not themselves under guilt, yet they are under a Law, and that requires as much as they can do; all the active Obedience which they are able to offer to God, is but their own duty, and will but suffice for themselves at the best; and as for a passive Obedience, all they can suffer is far short of being a valuable price for the Redemption of Gods Elect; besides that they are of an other nature, and therefore their suffering could not truly be called the suffering of man, whereas it is man who is come under condemnation, and his surety must be a man, *Heb. 2. 16.*

7. Hence if Christ had not come and done this work, it could never have been done, and so we could never have been justified: When we have seen all other persons and things stand by refused, a whole Creation counted but an insignificant Cipher in this respect; there remains now no other but Jesus Christ to do it for us; and on this account he is said to come and die, when we were without strength, *Rom. 5. 6.* and to be sent forth in due time; and in fullness of the time, *Gal. 4. 4.* when we were just dropping into the pit, and

and the gulf was ready to shut its mouth upon us : when Justice was upon the point of doing execution, and there was none to stay it ; yea he is said to come when there was no other Saviour to be found, *Isa. 63. 15.* woe, yea ten thousand woes had fallen upon poor sinners, if the Lord Jesus Christ had not undertaken this work, to obey for our Justification ; to become our Righteousness, and stand between us and all our harms, to look Justice it self in the face, and by his perfect Obedience to set us free from that dreadful sentence of Condemnation, which had past upon a world of sinners, and exposed them to suffer for ever the revenges of the Law, and impression of the holy indignation of the great God.

4. In the next place I am to make it evident that *this Righteousness of Christ is freely imputed of God.* It hath already been made to appear, That there must be a Righteousness presented to Justice for the procuring of our Justification ; That this cannot be our own personal ; That there is both a complete sufficiency in the Righteousness of Christ for the bringing of this about, and that there was an actual intendment of it to this end. But still, except it had been so, that

that all *Adams* lost Progeny had been equally advantaged by it; all that is hitherto said is not enough to satisfy an inquisitive soul; for the great enquiry yet remains, viz. how shall I come by it? in what way are any of the children of men made partakers of it? Here therefore there is something done on Gods part, and something on our part in order to this. The former of these, or what is done on Gods part is now under our consideration, and that is his gracious imputation of this Righteousness unto sinners. Here then there are two things that offer themselves to be made Good.

1. That *Christs* Righteousness justifies us in way of imputation.

2. That this imputation is an act of Gods free grace.

1. That *Christs* Righteousness justifies us in way of Imputation; or by the reputing and accounting of his Righteousness to be ours: That this is a great and undeniable Truth, there needs no more to clear it up, then the consideration of the plentiful Testimony of the Scripture, which ascertains us that it is so: The word [*Justification*] as it is used in the word of God doth almost every

every where intend a change of a mans state as it is legally considered; or refer to the relation which he bears to the Law, but besides we read, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *That Christ is made of God our Righteousness to us*; wherein is expressed one of the great benefits which believers are made partakers in by Christ; namely, that he is that Righteousness which is accepted as theirs; so that when Justice looks for a Righteousness which it may acquit them for, it finds it in him: and we read 2 Cor. 5. 19. *that we are reconciled to God in Christ*: and ver. 21: proves it to be by imputation; for no otherwise could he possibly be made sin for us, who knew none in himself; or we be made the Righteousness of God through him, who in our selves were sinners, and in Rom. 5. 19. the Apostle makes our Condemnation in Adam, and our Justification by Christ to be parallel, when he saith, *as by one mans Disobedience many were made sinners, so by the Obedience of one shall many be made Righteous*; but that was by imputation, and therefore so must this, and it must needs be so, otherwise it would be an unjust thing to justify the ungodly; nor could God be both just, and the Justifier of them that believe, both which things the Apostles doth assert, Rom. 4. 30. 36.

26. But that which I would a little further commorate upon it, to consider how, or in what way the Righteousness of Christ comes to be imputed to the people of God as theirs. I shall not need here to say much in the explaining of what it is to impute a thing to any person; acknowledging, reckoning, accounting a thing to a man as his own, all sound one and the same thing. Imputation of Righteousness in a process of Law, is an act of the Judge properly; and is of two sorts:

1. When a mans own personal Righteousness, being proved, and made legally to appear, and all the grounds of suspicion alleged against it are removed and confuted, is judicially declared to be his, and also to be sufficient to answer the demands of the Law, and thus if *Adam* had perfectly obeyed, and kept the Law in all its parts, that Righteousness of his should have been imputed to him, and he have been justified by it; and this would truly have been that which the Scripture calls a being justified by Works.

2. When another person hath done this for a man, and is accepted in what he hath done upon this account, and the man is there

thereupon declared to be looked upon as if he had done it himself, and is on this very account acquitted; now is the other persons doing imputed to him. That there is such a kind of imputation as this is, is evident and very well known among men. If a man be sued for a Debt, if he can prove that another hath paid it for him, and is able to produce the acquittance given for it, it is accepted, and the Law can take no place against him. If another man offer himself to bear the punishment of an Offender, and the Judge hath consented to such an exchange, and accordingly inflicted the penalty upon him instead of the other, he now imputes this to the prime Offender, and so he is delivered from the sentence of the Law, as having thus satisfied it: though in the latter case there is this difference from the former; *viz.* That such a proffer to bear the punishment in exchange is not of it self sufficient, except the Judge shall see cause to accept of it, but if he doth, it sufficeth: and this is that which is done when God justifieth a Sinner, *viz.* to accept of the righteousness of Christ, his active and passive obedience for him, and accounts it to be as really and truly the Sinners, as if he had personally wrought it: and in this sense some Divines take notice

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that

that the words *coursed*, *reckoned* or *imputed*, are used at least ten times in *Rom. 4.* and now it may not be amiss, briefly to enquire after the way in which Christs Righteoulness comes to be justly imputed to us, and reckoned as ours, unto our Justification; and this may be taken up in the consideration of these few following Conclusions.

1. *The Son of God assumed our nature, not for any perfection which it added unto him, but for the redemption and salvation of Gods Elect.* His own divine Person was not any whit perfected, or made better or more compleat and happy by this Assumption; for he had all the fulness of Divine and Glorious perfections in himself, being God; and what addition of glory can such a thing be conceived to be capable of making to him, for the eternal King to take upon him the form of a Servant? no; if we had not been sold for Bond-slaves, and thereupon stood in need of being Redeemed; if we had not been lost, & must either be recovered again, or undone the Son of God would have had no occasion for his incarnation: we stood in absolute need of it, and could not have been saved without it, and his great love to us put him upon such a thing: this business therefore

was engaged in for us, *Iſai. 9. 6. Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given:* and Paul plainly tells us what he came into the world for, *1 Tim. 1. 5. Jesus Christ came to save sinners.*

2. Jesus Christ to the end that he might be a Redeemer to mankind, took upon him to be a Surety for men; He is therefore called the Surety of the new and better Covenant; in which the salvation of mankind is contrived and laid up, *Heb. 7. 22.* now the proper work belonging to a Surety as such, is to take upon him the state, and to bear the penalty which is due to the person or persons for whom he thus becomes a Surety; he is to stand in their room; and whatsoever it be that the Law hath to lay to their charge and to doom them for, he is to stand to all the hazard of it, and undergo it; to pay their Fines, to bear their punishment in their stead, or for them, &c. in way of Exchange; for there is an Exchange that is made when a Surety comes in the room of a principal Debtor. The Lord Jesus Christ took upon him this Office, namely, to stand in the room of Gods Elect, to be liable to the Law in all its justs and demands, and for this he said *to be made sin for us, 2 Cor. 5. 21.*

2. God the Father accepted of this Suretyship of Jesus Christ upon the account of his Elect. God the Father is, according to Scripture Language, looked upon as the supreme Judge (not exclusively as shutting out the Son and Holy Ghost, but inclusively; for it is certain that the Deity is offended by sin, and every person is equally interested in the satisfaction that is to be made; but only the Word of God is wont to ascribe works particularly to that person wherein his order and manner of working doth especially appear.) Jesus Christ God man is Judge, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ*: But he is a delegated Judge, his Kingdom is a Mediatory Kingdom, and he must resign it again, when the work so laid upon him shall be accomplished, 1 Cor. 15. 26, 27. his Father put this Judgment into his hands, Job. 5. 22. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son*. Now God seeing how infinitely this Suretyship of the Lord Jesus Christ would redound to the Glory and Praise both of his Mercy and Justice, accepted of him as our Surety; for, as it is at the liberty of the Judge to accept or refuse, so it belongs unto his prudence to consider and well weigh the capacity of the Person thus making a ten-
dry

dry of himself to become a Surety, and to look to all the consequences which will result from such a thing, and accordingly either to receive or reject him; and in such exchanges persons are wont to take care at least that there shall be no disadvantage or loss arising therefrom; and the Great God saw and considered, that Justice would sit in the highest State, when it led the Son of God in triumph: That Christ should be put under the Law, and made to bear the rigour of it, afforded it a far greater Triumph than if all the World had been Judged and Condemned by it. Never did Justice sit in such State, or appear in such Majesty, as when it arreigned, condemned, and did execution upon the Son of God. *When Gods Sword was awakened against the man that was his fellow,* (so is he called by God himself, *Zech. 13. 7.*) he then declared himself righteous to purpose: and not only so, but he also saw that grace should in this way appear gloriously, which otherwise must never have been heard of in the World; I mean saving Grace, whereby ruined and condemned man is restored to life, and the lawful Captives are set at liberty, which is a most strange and stupendous thing, *Isai. 49. 24, 25.* God therefore voluntarily accepted of this; and how could he but

accept of it since it was his own contrivance, and he proposed it to the Son, and he came about the work to do his Fathers Will in it, Psal 40. 7. and he hath given his testimony to this acceptance of his, *Isai. 42. 1. Behold my Servant whom I have chosen, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth* Mat. 17. 5. *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him:* It is therefore said of the work undertaken by him, that *the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, Isai. 53. 10.*

4. The Lord Jesus Christ having gone through this work as a Surety, and fully accomplished it; it was now in justice looked upon as their work for whom he did it in Suretyship. The active and passive obedience of Christ must of necessity be accounted theirs, and they must have a real title to it for whom it was done by him, and in whose name it was accepted of by the Father; I say the active as well as the passive obedience; for though it was due from him as a man, and as under the Law, yet the Son of God was neither man, nor under the Law for himself but for his people. Christ therefore, taking upon him the person of his Elect, to answer and satisfie for them, and God receiving him in this quality, having before deputed him to it, it was as much in the

the exact rigor of God's Justice, as if they themselves had done and suffered in their own persons.

g. Hence, the Lord Jesus, when he had gone through with, and finished the work of Redemption, received a full acquittance in the name of God's Elect. That the Son of God, after he had done and suffered, was actually acquitted is evident, for otherwise he had never so risen from the dead in such a glorious manner as is recorded of him. Justice, which had him its Prisoner, under the bonds of Suretyship, would never have knocked off his Bonds, and set him at liberty on any other account, but because it had received satisfaction from him: and what satisfaction could that be, but the compleat answering of the obligation wherein he stood bound: he had made no personal forfeiture of himself by any Transgression; for he did no sin, neither was there any guile found in him: it was therefore satisfaction for us, according to all that which was required of us: so that his acquittance was in the respect that he stood Surety, and on that score it was our acquittance, we were discharged in it, and thus much is intended in that, *Rom. 4. 25*. He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our Justifi-

calien. Intimating, that as he had never been condemned but for us, so his Justification was for us: as he had never died, if our offence had not procured it, so when he arose from the dead, he brought with him a full discharge for his people.

6. Hence, when God accepts any into favour, and pardons their sins, it is upon the meer account of the righteousness of Christ. It is a true and bare respect which God hath to his obedience, he fixeth his eye upon that, when he doth this, and for the sake thereof he doth it: That God seals a Pardon, and gives evidence of it to the Souls and Consciences of any of the Children of men, upon their believing, fetcheth its reason from hence, because Christ was righteous: we therefore find such an expression in the Scripture, of our being accepted in the beloved, Eph. 1. 6. Having Redemption and forgiveness through his blood, ver. 7.

7. From the premises it naturally follows, that Christ's Righteousness is made ours by imputation; or, that that very individual Righteousness of his, which he in person performed as our Surety, is the righteousness which is reckoned to be ours, so as that we are justified before God upon the account of that, and no other: and there

there are divers considerations which will serve to enforce the credit of this Article.

1. *It must necessarily be either by imputation, or by infusion: a third way is not to be thought of, and a mixture of these is in no wise to be admitted, for that would be to confound the two Covenants; that the individual and personal Righteousness of Christ cannot be infused into a Believer, is a truth so plain and necessary, that to assert the contrary, is to speak a contradiction; and therefore if it be any way ours, it must needs be imputed to us. Every one that knows any thing of the nature of things, can tell that acts themselves are confined to the door of them, and terminate in him, and that no other person can in propriety of speech be said to do that individual action that another did: but on the other hand, this is a notion that is very well agreeing with common reason, that another did such a thing for this man, such an one paid a Debt for him, &c. that though the action terminated on the agent, yet the vertue of it extended to the benefit of another: and thus Paul tells us that Christ did for him, Gal. 2.2. Who loved me, and gave himself for me: It is not the same individual Grace that Believers receive from Christ, but Grace for Grace, Joh. 1.16.*

1. 16. i.e. a like Grace, Grace of the same kind, and out of the same treasure.

2. *The infused Righteousness of believers is not in this life perfect:* That believers have infused Righteousness is not denied: they have the renewing of the Image of God upon them, which is in *Righteousness and true holiness*, Eph: 4. 24. there is the grace of Sanctification, as well as the grace of Justification; but still this Image is restored here but in part and not in perfection: God hath not restored to his people such a measure of it as will endure the Covenant of Works; Paul had Righteousness personal, but he durst not arrogate perfection to his Obedience, but altogether disclaims it, and gives us to understand that he is but in pursuit of it, Phil. 3. 12, 13; so that although it be so, that Christ doth by his Spirit infuse an holiness and Righteousness into his people, when he works the work of Conversion in them; yet it is not the thing we are justified by or for; for that which is imperfect, though it may be accepted in a way of grace and pity, yet it cannot justify in a way of Law and equity, for these two things are quite of a distant nature the one from the other; and therefore there must be another Righteousness found for them.

doing of that, and another way discovered wherein it may become ours: which Righteousness (as is before proved) can be no other but the perfect Righteousness of Christ, (for it must be a perfect one) and that can become ours in no other way but only by Imputation.

3. *That which is by another's Righteousness, as being done by him, and accepted for us, can be ours only in the way of Imputation:* for this is the very notion of a thing which is imputed, it is the proper nature and definition of Imputation; and it is impossible that there should be any other conception of a way wherein it should be translated from the one to the other, to become his right, and to give him the liberty to challenge a true and real propriety in it.

4. *That Justification which is of the legal kind, must needs be by imputation;* and the reason for it is this, that where God justifies, there also the Law justifies: It is never to be denied, or so much called into question, but that God speaks the Truth, and there is no deceit or guile in his word, when he saith, *that he sees no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverſity in Israel;* he doth not dissemble; it is not because he shuts his eyes, and resolves not

to see or regard it, but the Reason must be, because he hath received full satisfaction, for it, the Law is answered, and therefore according to the Judgment of that he is as clear as if he had never sinned; and though it be a Gospel Truth, that a believer being once in Christ by Faith, and so justified, is not to be looked upon as an ungodly man after Justification; yet before Faith, and till he is justified he is ungodly, God finds him such when he comes to do this favour for him, *Rom. 4. 5. God who justifieth the ungodly*: and not only so, but he would also be so accounted still, were it not that God hath found a Righteousness in Christ that answers for him: *If we say we are without sin, we lie, and the Truth is not in us, 1 John 1. 18.* and thus sin, if there were nothing to answer for it, would stand for our Condemnation, and rigorous Justice would certainly pass the sentence of the Law upon us for it: the sentence therefore of Justification must needs proceed from a Righteousness which we never performed, or else God must baulk his own Law, in declaring us righteous; which he never will; Hence also,

5. *They who have sin remaining in the master Justification, must needs be justified by imputation*

tion, &c. to have the best believers, Paul himself complains of soul captivating sin, such as made him to cry out of his wretchedness, Rom. 7. and the wise man makes a challenge to all the holy men living, Prov. 20. 9. *Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* Satisfaction is but in part, there is something of the old man and his works; these things are obstructions to being justified for our own doings; the Psalmist cries out, Psal. 141. 2. *Enter not into Judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh be justified,* and Psal. 130. 3. *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquity, who could stand?* and therefore there must needs be another Righteousness reckoned to Gods people as their own, or else they would every day lay themselves open to be Condemned.

If any shall here further enquire, at what time this Righteousness of Christ is accepted for us, and imputed to us for our Justification? I Answer; That if we speak of what is past in Heaven, and there transacted between God the Father, and God the Son upon the account of all his Elect; it is then very certain, that there was an act past for this in the days of eternity, in the Covenant of Redemption, where, as God gave unto the Son the names of all his chosen ones, for whom

whom he undertook to merit life and salvation, so they were appointed to obtain pardon and eternal life through this merit of his; and therefore Christ calls them *those whom his Father had given to him before the world was*, i. e. as to their Redeemer. There was also another time, viz. at Christs Resurrection, when there was a solemn act of justification past for, or in the behalf of all those, when our great High Priest had, on the day of Attonement, born the names of his Israel upon his shoulders, and breast-plate before God: and made expiation for them with his blood, he received a discharge of all their debts, and they were set free unto him; for *he rose to our Justification*, Rom. 4. 25. But still this notwithstanding, there is yet a time wherein Gods Elect, lying in sin, and lying out from God, and remaining in a state of natural corruption, have not the application of this grace made unto them personally, but they remain *children of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. i. e. the curse is still lying upon them; they are not actually brought under the condition of the Covenant of Grace; Paul therefore at verse 12. speaking of the time preceding their conversion, declares concerning the believing *Ephesians*, *that at that time they were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth*

wealth

weakb of Israel, and Strangers from the Cove-
nants of Promise, having no hope, and without
God in the world; and that time was after
that Christ was risen, for it was the time
when the Apostles came to Preach the Gos-
pel to them, which was many years after
Christs Resurrection: so that the Applicati-
on, or actual imputation of Christs Righte-
ousness to sinners, by vertue whereof they
are justified, and have this priviledge confer-
red upon them, to be delivered from the
hands of the Law, and just accusations of a
condemning conscience, is at such time as
God gives them the grace to believe and lay
hold on this Righteousness of Christ to that
end, and not before: till when they are held
under condemnation, as will appear under
the next head: for though they are justified
to Christ, yet they are not justified in them-
selves. The substance of what hath been
here said, amounts to thus much, viz. that
he only who could pay our debts of Active
and Passive Obedience to the Law, could
possibly be our Justification before God, and
this there was none but Christ could do;
and therefore God who justifieth, must
needs as a righteous Judge have a proper re-
spect to his Righteousness in his proceeding
to justify us: we could not obey the Law
perfect.

perfectly in our own persons, but wofully fell short in all respects; but God is therefore pleased to reckon as if we had done all, because Christ did all in our behalf.

2. In the next place we are to take notice that this imputation of Christs Righteousness to our Justification, is an act of Gods free grace; in order to the evidencing of this, let me here premise;

1. That the freeness of Imputation doth not shut out the condition of believing which is required in the Gospel Covenant, as will appear more fully under the next general head. All conditions do not destroy the freeness of a gift; nay there are some which do properly and purposely make it the more manifest, and of this nature is Faith, which is the Gospel condition; God confined it to this, that so through it his rich grace might shine out the more conspicuously, Rom. 4. 16. Therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by grace; as a man that bequeaths a Legacy, on condition that the Legatee shall receive it as a kindness: and much less then doth it obscure the riches of grace, when we consider that he himself who makes, doth also give the condition, as well as the gift of Justification follow.

following upon it; and we are assured that he doth so, Eph. 2. 8, 9, by grace are ye saved through Faith, and that (namely faith) not of your selves, it is the gift of God; and indeed we are no more able to believe of our selves, than we are able to justify our selves, for none can come unto Christ without the Father draw him: So that it is evident, that a gracious vocation doth not destroy, but contrarily establish the grace of Justification, it being nothing else but an Antecedent Grace bestowed upon us in order to our being made to participate in one that follows.

2. That it doth not take from, but increase the greatness of the free grace of it, that the Righteousness which is imputed to us, was to Jesus Christ a costly Righteousness: the kindness of a benefactor discovers it self in his bestowing of that upon others for nothing but their accepting of it, which cost him a great summe to purchase for them, more than it would if he had only parted with that which stood him in nothing at all. The Doctrine of Christs Satisfaction for the working out of a Righteousness for us, by the which we might be justified, doth not derogate from, but greatly illustrate the Doctrine of the free grace of God: if a man Redeem a
F captive,

captive, and set him at liberty without any Repayment, his kindness is valued according to his expense; and so it is in the present case, for though it cost Christ an unknown price to obtain it, yet all this cost is laid out upon the sinner ~~grace~~. Now that this Righteousness of Christ is freely imputed to us, or is an act of rich and eminent grace, will appear, if we consider these things.

The first and highest cause from whence it is derived, and that is Gods own meer good pleasure. He was the first that ever thought of this thing, and if he had not thought of it, it would never have entred into our hearts. It was rooted in his eternal Decree of Election, and the foundation of it was laid in the Covenant of Redemption: in that he contrived the way how it might be done, agreed about it, and made it sure; and hence it comes to pass that our Justification is derived down to us from this well-head, Rom. 8. 29, 30. *Whom he foreknew, them he predestinated, whom he predestinated, them he called, and whom he called, them he also justified.* Justification is one of those benefits that we receive by and with Christ; and all that partake in his benefits, were predestinated thereunto before time, Eph. 1. 5, 6. *having predestinated*

destinated us to the Adoption, &c. and what can there be thought of but his own grace that should put God upon it, when we were not, to lay in for a Justification for us when we should come to stand in need of it?

2. The way wherein Jesus Christ came to be the Meritorious Cause of our Justification; or made way for this imputation of his Righteousness to be made unto us, and that was in a Covenant-way; in which Gods free and willing acceptance of him to be such an one for us intervened, to give such an efficacy or operation to this Righteousness of his: It is true, that the Obedience of Christ was in it self an Obedience so full, and so worthy, and every way so completely answering to the Law, for the matter of it, that it had in it self and intrinsically a sufficient value and vertue, enough to stand for the price of the Redemption of all sinners, as is before proved; so that if God had seen meet to have justified and saved the world, and every individual of the race of fallen man, there needed no more to be done for the doing of it in a way of Justice, then what was to be found in the Obedience of Christ: but still, that which made it actually to become a ransom for us, was that God

ted it at his hands for us, or on our accounts, and if he had refused it, it had not been a Ransom, though its real worth had been nothing less than it now is: *Abab* proffered to *Naboth* a full and valuable price for his Vineyard, whatsoever in reason he would ask for it, but yet he did not so buy it, or that was not the purchase of it, because he refused to accept it, who was the owner of it, and did not lie under the obligation to sell, because the other had a mind to buy. God hath sinners forfeited into the hands of his Justice, and for sin bound to die, yea the condemnation of death is past upon them; they are his Prisoners, and he may do with them his pleasure: till therefore he takes a price for their Redemption, all offers of all one, how worthy soever it may be, are altogether insignificant. Now when God imputes to us the Righteousness of Christ for our Justification, and so delivers us from our Judge, he in so doing gives away that right of his which he had over us to have destroyed us for ever, and that of his own meer motion; for if he had refused so to do, and fallen upon us with implacable fury, none could for this have charged him with the least injustice: herein therefore he displays the freedom of his own grace, in that he was freely willing

willing that sinners should be saved; and it is an observation which deserves to be much thought upon, and carries great consolation in it, that God was as forward for mans deliverance by Christ, as Christ was to undertake it, that the heart of the great God is as much engaged in love to poor men that have undone themselves that they may be saved, as the heart of Christ was in going through that great work in which it was accomplished; or otherwise it had been frustrated and come to nothing.

3. *Because, though God in his Justifying of a sinner, looks at, and requires the full merit of Christs Obedience, yet he looks not at any Righteousness at all in the person who is to be justified.* He hath no consideration of the person in this case, nor is it enquired about him, whether he have been a greater or lesser sinner, whether he hath lived a longer or a shorter time in a state of alienation from the life of Christ; but this Righteousness is as readily and willingly applied to a *chief sinner*, such as Paul confesseth himself to have been, *1 Tim. I. 16.* as to one that hath not sinned so notoriously but been more restrained in his conversation; he as well, and as soon justifies one that hath been a blasphem-
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mer, a Drunkard, an Idolater, a profane Sabbath-breaker, Swearer, &c. as him that hath been a civil and moral man; see what a crew *Paul* reckons up. 1 Cor. 6. 9. 10. and yet tells his *Corinthians* that though some of them had been such, yet they were *Justified*, ver: 11. the force of this Reason lies here; That the sinner never struck one stroak to the procuring of his own Justification, or to his deserving to have the Righteousness of Christ imputed to him: there is not one grain of his own Righteousness in it, but it is all Christs: this garment of Righteousness is made to his hand; yea, and he doth not so much as put it on of himself: Imputation alone is that which makes it his, and that is Gods act; and he did never by any thing that he hath done lay any the least obligation upon God to do it; and that must needs be most free, to the earning and procuring of which, we have never done any thing, nor not so much as to move his favour towards us.

4. *Because at the same time when God justifies a sinner, he might by the sinners own acknowledgment justly condemn him: he hath plea enough against him; when a poor sensible sinner, ready to sink under the load of sin and guilt, betakes himself to God in the*
name

name of Christ for pardon and peace, he there ingeniously confesseth his own unworthiness of it, and that in himself he can lay no claim to it, thus doth the Prodigal, Luke 15. 18. 19. *Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son;* yea he confesseth his own worthiness to be condemned, Dan. 9. 8. *to us belongeth shame and confusion of face;* and therefore he puts mercy and forgiveness together, and acknowledgeth them to be Gods prerogative, ver. 9. *to the Lord our God belongs mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;* and what can such an imputation be less than free grace, that is applied to one that lies at the foot of Sovereignty, and is perswaded that if God spurn him away to hell, he shall do him no injury at all? that knows nothing but mercy can spare and save him.

5. *Because till God imputes the Righteousness of Christ unto him, the sinner is in no better a state than the rest of mankind: he is a child of wrath by nature as well as they, Eph. 2. 3. all the difference which there is made betwixt them, proceeds meerly from Gods good will and until that breaks out, there is no intrinsic difference between the one and the*

other: It is true, God makes him holy too; but yet he was as faulty in himself till God came to do this for him: if therefore God is righteous in withholding of this imputation from all the rest of mankind, that had an equal goodness in them with those that are justified, the imputation of Christs Righteousness unto them for their Justification must needs be free grace; for, what other reason can enter into mans thoughts to conceive, why two that are every way in themselves alike, and one hath nothing in him more to engage the good will of God to him than the other, should have such a vastly different dispensation of Providence dispensed to them, that the one should be justified, and the other left under condemnation? if it be said that the one believes, and the other believes not, it is readily answered, that this faith was given him for his Justification.

5. The last thing offered to consideration, is to clear it up *that this Righteousness of Christ is received only by Faith*, we have already seen what is done on Gods part in order to the making of Christs Justifying Righteousness ours; he reckons or imputes it to us, and that of his meer grace: we are now a little to consider what

what is done on our part to this end; and that is we are to receive it: If a man will be the possessor of a gift which is given him, he must take it, give it acceptance: now the hand which here entertains this free favour of God, is Faith: here therefore three things may be enquired into, *viz.*

1. *What is Justifying Faith?*

2. *How this Faith serves to our Justification?*

3. *How may it appear that Faith only on our part is instrumental to our Justification?*

1. *What is true Justifying Faith?*

A. That there are several sorts of Faith made mention of in the Scripture, is easily obvious unto such as are acquainted with it; but there is one sort only by which we are justified; and I shall not here need to take notice of any other, nor enquire after any other consideration of this Faith besides what is proper to it as it justifies; and accordingly it may be thus described: *Justifying Faith is a particular receiving of Christ in the promise of special mercy, by a confidence or reliance of the Soul upon him, for all that good which*

which he hath purchased, and God hath promised.

In clearing up of this description we may observe these things.

1. *That the next and immediate object of Justifying Faith is Jesus Christ.* Faith that justifies closeth in with the person of Christ; not barely considered as he is the second person in the Trinity, but as he is God-man-Mediator. Justification is one piece of communion with Christ in his benefits; now our Union to him, is the ground of our Communion with him. Christ himself must be ours, if ever his Righteousness come to be ours; he is therefore called *the Lord our Righteousness*, *Jer. 23. 6.* and is said to be made *Righteousness* it self unto us, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* which expressions refer to his person: so that when once we have gotten an interest in him, and are really entituled to him, we are then, and not till then, invested with a Righteousness which will clear us from all guilt, and declare us to be righteous; for in him it is that we are to have it, *Isa. 45. 24.* *In the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength,* and *ver. 25.* *In the Lord shall the seed of Israel be justified:* on this account it is that *Paul* in our Text concludes upon this, that if he can but

be found in him, he is then safe enough, as having a Righteousness to friend, which will justify him perfectly.

2. *That which gives the soul the advantage to take hold of the person of Christ, is the promise of special mercy in the which he is exhibited.* It is not to be denied that the whole Scripture is serviceable to the Faith of Gods Elect; and it all some way or other leads to Christ; and for this reason is the Scripture called *the word of Faith*: 1 Tim. 4. 6. and it is all of it to be believed, because it is all true, and confirmed by the Testimony of God himself; it is the word of him who is the Truth; and it is all profitable, and there are various uses to which it serveth, both in the drawing of men to Christ, to believe in him, and in the building of them up in their most holy Faith, and for the direction of them how they ought to serve him in all things; see 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. But yet every portion of Scripture doth not alike nextly serve to give the sinner an advantage to lay hold upon Jesus Christ. The Scripture consists of divers parts, and these serve nextly to various ends and uses, though all of them contribute something to the helping forward of the glory of God in the happiness of fallen

man: There are recorded in it many
 histories; and these serve partly for holy
 example, and partly for solemn caution to
 men: there are moral precepts, there are
 sharp reproofs, there are severe threatnings,
 &c. all of which have their particular profit,
 and will serve, either to the preparing of a
 sinner for this closure with Christ by faith,
 or for the helping of a believer home to the
 heavenly Kingdom: But that which nextly
 and most proper gives us the advantage and
 encouragement to believe in Christ, is that
 special revelation which God hath been plea-
 sed to make of him, in the which revelati-
 on he gives us to understand, that as he is a
 compleat and all sufficient Saviour, so he in-
 vites Sinners to come to and accept of him,
 and put their trust in him, and engageth to
 all such as so do, that they shall in and by
 him obtain the pardon of Sin, and peace
 with God; that if they will but take Christ
 on his terms, he shall be theirs: hence it is
 that by the promise we are said to be *parta-
 kers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and it
 was upon a promise that *Abraham believed*,
and it was accounted to him for Righteousness,
 Gen. 15. 5, 6. and such a promise is a neces-
 sary medium for faith to come to Christ and
 take hold of him by. For Sin, which all
 the

the children of men are naturally guilty of, had separated between God and man, and all mankind was for Sin under a severe threatening : so that they had no hold of God at all, but were quite knockt off from any such thing : and now how shall they believe that this God will pardon them, and be reconciled unto them without some encouragement. The alone and bare consideration of Gods power to do them this kindness, is not enough, because there is a dreadful curse stands between to dishearten them from taking hold of that ; and until it be removed they may be certain that God will never be so propitious to them. It must therefore be only a word of promise that can offer a Sinner any encouragement at all. *To believe that God will accept of and pardon us in Christ, before such time as he hath declared himself willing to do it, is not faith but frenzy : because before the word of promise did break out, there was nothing else but wrath, and a sentence of condemnation to be read or heard of for the Sinner ; here therefore is the full prospect of hope.*

3. *That property of Faith whereby it justifies, is that it helps the soul to rely upon Christ for all the good which is laid up in the promise.*

promise: this reliance, trust or confidence is the proper justifying act of Faith. It is true, as there is a promise revealed to the soul, by which he comes to take hold of Christ by Faith, so there are two things necessarily pre-required to this confidence: As

1. *That he have the understanding or apprehension of the things that are promised, and of the terms of the promise*: there can be no justifying Faith without this; the object must be revealed to the man, or otherwise it cannot be relied upon by him; without this knowledge he cannot close in with the good of the promise, an ignorant faith is a great contradiction: Paul knows whom he hath trusted; our Saviour Christ speaking to the woman of Samaria, tells her, *John 4. 22. Ye worship ye know not what? we worship what we know*: Faith is the act of a reasonable creature; now the natural motion of the will in man, is by the light of the understanding, which is to be eyes unto it, and hence Faith is said to come by hearing, *Rom. 10. 17.* and that there is *no believing in him of whom men have not heard, ver. 14.* now hearing is counted the sense of discipline, because by it the understandings of men are

wont to be informed in the notion of the things that they are told of:

2. That in his Judgment, he yield a credit and assent to the Truth of these things that he knows, for although an historical Faith alone, will not amount to a justifying Faith, yet there must of necessity be such a Faith in order to the other, and without this there cannot be any of that in the man.

He that doth not give credit to the truth of the promise, will never rely upon it for mercy and salvation; he that comes to God, (i. e. in Faith) must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. 12. 6. It is therefore one great part of Gospel work, to enlighten mens understandings in the knowledge of Christ, and of the great things purchased by him to be conferred upon his people, Eph. 1. 18, 19. and if ever we come to take hold of the promise by Faith, and of Christ in it, we are to believe that God is true in all that he saith, that his Testimony carries its own credit with it, because it is the Word of God who cannot lye; and that this word of promise is his word; and that there is salvation sufficient

sufficient in Jesus Christ who is exhibited to us in this promise, and that this salvation shall without fail be bestowed upon all such as do believe in him, according unto it: that he who hath promised is faithful, and will also perform: without a free and full assent to, & credit of all this, there is no hope that a soul should be perswaded really to adventure it self upon the word of promise.

But still this is not all that is requisite, nay there may be all this; yet not a saving faith: that therefore which is the proper distinguishing note of this faith, in that upon all this the soul is carried forth to close with, and cast it self upon Christ as he is revealed in the promise. I am not here speaking of the strength by which this is done, but only of the act it self; and to make the thing more distinct, let me propose these things to consideration.

1. That it is not the promise it self, but that which is promised in it, which is the object of Justifying Faith. The promise it self is not our justification, but it is a medium to it, or it brings something along with it, that is by it offered unto us, which is able to justify us, and that is Christ and his Righteousness.

It therefore contains in it a revelation of that great mystery of Salvation by Jesus Christ. The promise indeed makes offer to the children of Men of a pardon of sin, and of reconciliation unto God; but this is not all, but together with such an offer made, it exhibits the way by which, and the Author by whom it is to be enjoyed, and that is no other but Jesus Christ: so that the promise in the proper notion of it, is nothing else but an instrument of bringing Jesus Christ to the Soul, and helping it to its closing in with him.

2. *That Jesus Christ is in the general promise offered to every one, in particular, that is priviledged to bear it, upon a Gospel condition. A general bears a true respect to all and every of the individuals that are contained under it: when the Gospel of Jesus Christ is Preached to a company of sinful men, and it is proclaimed to them, and in their audience, That whosoever will may come and drink of the waters of Life freely, Rev. 22. 17. That every one who is a thirsty may come and buy and eat, &c. Isai. 55. 1 now every person for himself, that comes within the sound of such a Proclamation, may with great safety thus argue in himself, I then am herein concerned*

I may come if I will, the invitation is made to me, why then should I neglect to accept it, or shut out my self by unbelief? such is the Gospel promise: and it is also made upon a condition; there are the terms annexed to it, there is the way declared in which the good promised may be obtained: for God in bringing Sinners home to Christ, brings them under a new Covenant Relation, and the promise that is revealed in it, is the great encouragement of the Covenant, giving men to understand what shall be the advantage that shall accrue to them by putting of themselves under it; and as it is in it self an encouragement, so it alwayes carries in it something that is required in order to our being made the owners of it, and heirs of all the good which is contained in it: now this condition is believing: that which the Gospel saith, is, that if we ever hope to get a Pardon of all our sins, and have our persons to find acceptance with an Holy God, in and through Jesus Christ, we must believe in him; and this is so positive and unalterable that the want of it will exclude us from all hope of participation in such a favour; and therefore it is not only assured to all such but denied to all others, *Mark 16. 16. He that believes and is Baptized, shall be saved.*

but he that believes not shall be damned, 1 Joh. 5. 12. He that hath the Son hath life; but he that hath not the Son hath not life.

2. That he who performs the condition of the general Gospel Promise, doth in so doing make the good of it so to become his own by promise. If there were no promise made to such a thing, or if the party doing it were no way related to it, it not being propounded and offered to him, the performance were then of no force; but if there be a promise made and offered, and accepted, and the demand of it performed, the fulfilment of it stands engaged. If God saith, let him that will believe in Christ, and if he doth, I will certainly justify him, then whosoever hears the condition, is perswaded by the promise to entertain it, and accordingly doth believe, he thereby comes under a particular and personal relation to the good exhibited, and hath a security of it in the promise: If Christ invites a whole company of weary and heavy laden sinners to come to him, and tells them, that he of them that doth come shall find rest to his Soul, then if this or that person, if one or more of the company come, though all the rest stay away; they take him at his word; they do, as it were bind the Cove-

nant, and bring Christ himself into Bonds; so that God can as well deny himself, as refuse to justifie such; his word is past, the offer is his own, and he neither may, nor can, nor will in any wise reverse it.

4. *This is done by every one who upon the Gospel invitation, is perswaded by the Spirit of God to cast himself upon Christ, and to put his trust in him. It is not a believing Christ to be, but a believing in Christ: it is not a bare act of the understanding that is here exerted, but the promise comes in at the understanding, which judgeth of it, and gives approbation to it as that which is true and eligible, and so passeth it over to the affections, which are raised and stirred by it, but all this is too little alone, but at last the Will sets its Seal to it, chaseth, embraceth, rolls it self upon it: So that Faith and Unbelief are rooted in the Will: hence we shall find that Christ layes the blame of mens not believing in him upon their Wills, Job. 5. 40. Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life: thus also the Scripture is frequently expressing the work of Faith, by the Souls putting of its trust in Christ, as Psal. 2. 12. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him. So Isai. 50. 10. Let him*
trust

trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. And unbelief is called a departing from him, Heb. 3. 12. Faith also is expressed by the notion of embracing the promise, and so of the good that is brought in it, Heb. 11. 13. they were persuaded of them, and embraced them. So that every one who believes, hath performed the thing which is required; he hath come up to that which the promise challenged of them that would be entitled to it.

5. Hence, when a Soul is enabled to believe in Christ as he is revealed to us in the promise, Christ now becomes his to all those intents and purposes for which he was exhibited therein. So that when Christ is his, then all of Christ that is communicable is his also in the same Covenant; for Christ and his benefits go together, as being inseparable, and as we cannot have his benefits, except we have his person, so we cannot enjoy him, but we must withal participate in all the precious fruits of his Redemption: the Scripture therefore delights to be frequently setting forth this thing under the name and notion of a Marriage Covenant between a Man and Woman, in which it is known that a propriety in the person, gives a right to the estate: Now one part of Christs Treasure, a title whereunto

A Brief Discourse

he conveys to such as do believe in him, and so are married to him in an everlasting Covenant, is *his Righteousness*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. He is of *God made unto us, Our Righteousness*. All the new Covenant relations of Christ, do pass over in this conveyance to the Believer, and he hath an unquestionable claim to them all; he is now our Redeemer, our Mediator, our Surety, our Advocate: and upon this account it is, *viz.* because in believing we receive Christ unto an efficacious Justification that it is called justifying Faith.

2. It follows to consider how *Faith Justifies*, or how it serves to our *Justification*; and this may be easily gathered out of the foregoing Discourse: the nature of justifying Faith, if it be duely pondered, will tell us what influence it hath into the justification of a sinner; but to make it a little more clear and easie, we may make a little more distinct and particular enquiry into it, and consider of it,

1. *Negatively*; and here let us observe these things;

1. *That Faith doth not justify us, as it hath any worth or merit of its own in it, to deserve or earn Justification for us*: they do very grossly mistake themselves, who think that

Faith

Faith hath every way the same consideration in the new Covenant, which obedience or works had in the Old: It is true, it is the condition of this as obedience was the condition of the other: but yet there is this plain and manifest difference, that in the old Covenant God had a proper respect to the work of Obedience, as that which had a Covenant merit in it, or for which man was to have been justified, if he had continued in it, *Rom 10. 5. Moses describeth the Righteousness, which is of the Law, that the man that doth these things shall live by them.* But in the process of Gospel Justification, it is *Christ's Righteousness* which stands to answer in the room of ours, and not our Faith: So that the merit of our Justification is in the object, viz. *Christ*, and not in the act of Faith: It we believe in him, he then stands to answer for us to our Judge, and all his earnings are made over to us upon our believing, and placed to our account.

2. Hence it follows naturally, that Faith hath no natural or proper virtue in it self to justify a Sinner; for that which hath in it self a real virtue to justify, must answer the Law in all its demands, whereas Faith in it self answers to none of them: there is no such thing as a legal obedience in Faith, for it is the proper-

ty of *Faith* to fly from the Law unto Grace, and therefore it never designs a personal answering of the Law, but seeks a deliverance from it in and through *Jesus Christ*; and that is the privilege of believing, *Rom. 6. 14. ye are not under the Law but under Grace.* Faith fetcheth in all virtue from abroad: and in truth it justifies a man no more, than the look of a bitten *Israelite* upon the Brazen Serpent healed him: now it was not the virtue of the look, but the virtue that was put into the Brazen Serpent that healed him who so looked upon it, else he might have looked long enough before he had been cured: so it is not the virtue of believing, but of *Christ* who is believed in, that justifies. Faith justifies a sinner, as the *Womans* touch of *Christs* Garment healed her Issue of Blood, and that was the virtue, not of the touch, but of *Christ*, which issued from him upon her touching him; and therefore he declares that *he felt* virtue to go out of him, upon that exertion of her Faith in so touching him, *Luk. 8. 46.*

3. And from the premises it follows that Faith doth not justify as it is a work; for if it did so, then it would either have merit, or at least virtue in it to justify, but we see that it hath neither. Faith is, in a large sense

a work ; it is an act of Obedience to God, it is an answering to the Gospel command ; it is in it self, as it is habitually rooted in the soul, one of the graces of sanctification, and as it exerts it self in the acts of believing, it is an exercise of holiness : God requires Faith of all that hear the Gospel, that is his command that they believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, 1 John 3. 23. but in this sense it cannot justify : for then we must not only be justified by believing, but this priviledge must be bestowed upon us for believing ; for if it answer faith as a work, then it comes as wages ; but Justifying Faith excludes all works, and therefore cannot it self justify as a work ; Rom. 3. 28. we conclude that a man is justified by Faith, without the deeds of the Law : faith is the condition of the New Covenant, and a Covenant receives its denomination from the quality of its condition, if then faith should justify as a work, it were but a New Covenant of works, whereas it is in truth a Covenant of Grace.

4. Neither doth Faith justify as the principal applier of the Justification which is procured by Christ, unto us ; it is not to be looked upon as the highest cause of the application of the benefit to our persons : this also was to
exalt

exalt it above its place, and give it a preeminence beyond its due. It is before intimated, that in the application of the Righteousness of Christ unto us, there is something done by God, and something done by us; now that which God doth is the principal, *viz.* he takes this Righteousness of the hands of Christ, as done for us, and then he gives it to us, or imputes it to our account of his own rich grace, and this imputation is the main efficient of our Justification; for *it is God that justifies, Rom. 8. 23. i. e.* principally, giving is more honourable than receiving, and we owe the acknowledgment of all the benefit we have in being enriched by such a gift, to him that conferred it upon us, and nothing to our selves for taking it; although it be still a truth, that if we had not received it, we could not have been enriched by it.

2. *Affirmatively; Faith justifies instrumentally, as it receives the Lord Jesus Christ, and his merits offered in the Covenant.* It is before made clear that the Righteousness of Christ is the thing for which we are Justified: now the proper work of Faith in this affair, is to receive it unto Justification; and that because it is the term or condition of the new Covenant.

Covenant. God hath in his good pleasure made choice of this way to convey the efficacy to, and bestow an interest in the Righteousness of Christ upon sinners, viz. by their believing in his Son: He doth (as it were) say, behold here is a Righteousness, in which I am well contented, it exceedingly well pleaseth me to bestow pardoning grace upon sinful men upon the account of it, but yet if any desire to have the application of it made unto them in particular, it is to be expected only in this way, they must believe, and if they so do, it shall be theirs: and hereupon we may come at the right conception of what faith doth towards our being justified; this is all that can be with any truth ascribed to it, that it brings us under the Covenant condition, and thereupon it renders us the *qualified* Subjects of the *promise* of grace *which is therein exhibited*; and this it doth by accepting, embracing, and *placing* its hope and trust in the Righteousness of Christ: and so it follows that we are justified not for our faith, or believing, but for Christ; but yet it is by faith, or in a way of believing. For our full satisfaction in the truth of this, it is good for us to take notice that the Scripture is pleased to ascribe our Justification to divers things, and that tells us that it must

must have reference to divers respects, and
 they are to be well understood by such as
 would not be deceived, but ascribe to each
 of them, that which belongs to them, and
 no more or less: and the rather should we
 labour to be distinct in our conception of
 them, lest otherwise we should rob Christ of
 his merits, and God of his grace, and lift our
 selves up above our own place, and to make
 it in one of the main and fundamental points
 of our hopes. Sometimes then it ascribes it to
 grace, Rom. 3. 24. Being justified freely by his
 grace: and then it points us to take notice of
 the Imputation, or the act of Justifying us,
 which being done by God, proceeds or flows
 from his meer grace, no ways merited or de-
 served by us: Sometimes it ascribes it to the
 Blood of Christ, Rom. 5. 9. much
 more than being now justified by his blood, and
 then it directs us to eye the meritorious cause,
 his blood being put Metonymically; for his sa-
 tisfaction; and that Synechdochically for his
 whole Obedience by which he merited for us,
 and therefore sometime it gives it to his O-
 bedience in general, Rom. 5. 19. By the O-
 bedience of one many shall be made righteous;
 and so it shews us the matter of our Justifica-
 tion. Sometimes it acknowledgeth it to God,
 Rom. 8. 33. It is God that justifieth; and so we

are given to discover the *efficient* of our Justification, for it is God who applying the *Righteousness* of Christ to us, and covering us with it, doth actually justify us, and sometimes *Faith* is honoured with having it ascribed to that, *Rom. 5. 1. Being justified by faith;* and then it intends the *instrument* or hand which receives it, for when we have given to each other that which is their due, what else can their remain to be attributed to *Faith* but only this? And this further serves to let us understand, that our actual or personal *Justification*, being one part of the work of application, wherein this fruit of Redemption is by the Spirit applied to us upon our *believing*, that therefore we are not *Justified* in a Gospel sense, before, but in and with our believing in Christ: for then only is that *Justification* which the Son of God hath procured for us, and received in our name, brought home to us, and conferred upon us, which is plainly included in our being said to be *justified by Faith*.

3. In the last place, it remains to make it evident, That *Faith* only on our part is instrumental to our *Justification*: that nothing else of ours hath any influence upon the pardon of our sin, and the declaring of us *Righteous*:

reous; and to evident this, let it be considered, that there are but two things of ours that can make any pretence to have any share in our Justification, and they are our *Faith and our works of Obedience to the Law or Command of God, or the exercises of the other graces of Sanctification in us*: it will therefore suffice to make it appear to be of Faith alone, and that nothing else that is done by us can have any influence into it, by shewing how impossible it is that any holy works, or gracious acts of Obedience done by us should contribute any thing to our Justification before God, whence it will follow that either Faith alone, or nothing at all which proceeds from us is concerned in it, and the truth of this will appear to any that shall but thoroughly weigh these following conclusions.

I. *All the acts of Evangelical Obedience as they come from us, or are done by us, are parts of our Righteousness; and therefore for that reason they are wholly excluded from having any influence into our Justification, as hath been already proved in the foregoing discourse: and there is this one reason which carries enough in it to stop the mouth of all cavillings against it, viz. That which doth itself stand in need of a pardon, before it can find acceptance*

acceptance with an holy God, cannot any way help to justify us; but such are all our acts of Obedience: there is indeed an Evangelical Righteousness in them, they are done in sincerity, and they Flow from a principle of Sanctification, and have a conformity, though imperfect to the Law of God, but yet they cannot justify, because they have their spots, deficiency, short coming, and thereupon they need the Righteousness of another for their Justification: we are called Priests to God, in respect of our new Obedience, but we must remember that there was a Law requiring that the Priests right ear, right thumb and right toe must be touched with the blood of the Sacrifice, intimating that all we do in our service to God stands in need of the imputation of Christs merit, or else it is of no worth: yea and we find that the High Priest, who was principally a Type of Christ, was to bear the iniquity of the holy things of the children of Israel, and to make expiation for them, telling us that Christ makes it one part of his work to appease his Fathers displeasure, and give ground for the acceptance of all we do in integrity, through his own merits.

2. *We are justified by the Righteousness of another*

member, viz. of Jesus Christ, which is made ours, and accepted for us, and instead of our own, or in the room of the Righteousness which we were by the first Covenant obliged unto; this hath been already proved, and thence it follows by way of consequence.

1. *That the Righteousness by which we are to be justified, is already wrought out and perfected: and if so, then there is nothing of ours that can justify us by addition to, or being a complement of that Righteousness: for it hath been made to appear, that it is alone, Christs Righteousness; it admits of no addition to it, or compleating of it, it needs no eiking out, for then he should not save to the uttermost. As God indented with Christ for so he accepted of his Obedience, at the full price of our Redemption, and the whole Satisfaction to his Law; so that God looks only to this, and there is nothing else that he will look upon as the procuring cause of our pardon and acceptance into favour, but only his Sons Righteousness.*

2. *Hence there is nothing of ours that can have any hand in our Justification, but only that which is instrumental to make this Righteousness of Christ to become actually ours; we have*

have nothing to do for our being justified; but to receive Christs Righteousness for it: now there is nothing of ours but only our Faith which is capable of such a thing as this; as for our moral virtues, and all our actions of obedience to the Law of God, they are far from having a vertue of receiving Christ, for they are truly and properly our returns, or offerings of Thanksgiving unto him, in the acknowledgment of his great favours bestowed upon us; so that faith and no other Grace is fitted for this work.

3. To be Justified by the free Grace of God, excludes any works of ours from our Justification. That the riches of free Grace are discerned in this affair hath been already made evident: and what contribution can our works of Obedience be conceived to make towards our being justified, except we should suppose that they move, and prevail with God, offer him some ground and reason why he should pass this act upon us: and if this be supposed and conceded to, then it will follow that he must justify us for our works, whereas the Apostle assures us that such a notion doth certainly exclude Grace, and brings in vain boasting, which God had design wholly to remove in the way of
H
mans

man's being justified, Rom. 3. 27. *Where is boasting then? it is excluded, by what Law? of works? nay, but by the Law of Faith.* 2 Tim. 1. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.*

4. They are only the work of a justified Believer that are Evangelically acceptable unto God; and therefore there are no works that can contribute so much as instrumentally to our Justification: We no sooner believe, but we are justified, for Faith takes on the Garment of Christ's Righteousness, and we are immediately in him, and stand under the security of his Suretyship, and all this passeth before we are capable of doing any one action, that in Gospel account may be called good, for without Faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11. 6. now it is certain, and evident to any rational man, that the effect cannot go before the cause, and be causal to it; it involves a contradiction to to say or suppose the works are the fruits and evidence of Justifying Faith, and therefore they cannot possibly be helpful towards the justifying of a Sinner before God, who until their persons are accepted, receives none of their Sacrifices at the hands of men: it must then be Faith alone.

alone; that beggarly Grace, that carries the Soul to Christ, and layeth it prostrate at his feet, and takes hold upon his Righteousness, and confides in him for all good; there is nothing else of ours that can have any influence into this affair, and that only in the sense before expressed. This doth not assert this Faith to be alone, for it never is so, but it is alwayes accompanied with all the other Graces and Vertues of the Spirit of God, which at the same time when he makes a man a Believer, are infused into the man; and Faith is every day enivigorating of, and working by them, in a course of grateful obedience, in acknowledgment of the free favours of God bestowed upon him; and therefore the Faith by which we are justified is not such a Faith as emboldens men to sin; such a Faith as allows men this indulgence, will be found far from justifying: that Faith, and that only which worketh by love, and purifyeth the heart, can afford men the comforts and assurances of the pardon of their sins, and their peace with God.

USE I. For Information:

There are two or three Conclusions which properly arise from the Doctrine

1. We may hence learn one main difference between the first and second Covenant; or the Covenant of works and the Covenant of Grace. The difference between these two doth not lye in that the One hath a Righteousness according to which it proceeds, and by which it tries the Children of men, and that the other hath none at all; it is highly derogatory to the Glory of God for any to think that he who was exactly just in the dispensation of the old Covenant between him and man, hath left off to be just, and laid aside his holiness and righteousness, that he might so make way to be gracious in the dispensation of the second: no, its Gods glory that he can be both just, and yet justify a sinner; that he can give to him, and accept for him a Righteousness, according to which he himself may righteously proceed to acquit him. But here therefore properly lies the difference between these two, viz. that the one looks at a personal, whereas the other hath respect to a Relative Righteousness: there is as great, and in some sense a greater Righteousness in the new Covenant than there was in the old; for this looks at the Righteousness of man, but that hath fixed upon the Righteousness of God; Text. That confined the man within himself, and bid him to look for

it at home, whereas this sends him abroad to enquire for the matter and ground of his justification. And this consideration may teach us, *that all such as hope to be justified, and would not finally miss of their expectation, must go out of themselves for it*; This then is essential to justifying Faith, that it carries us quite out of our selves to Jesus Christ for life.

2. Here also we may be informed, that a man may be without sin in respect of Justification, and yet have a great deal of the remainders of sin in him, in respect of Sanctification. It hath offered matter of no little perplexity to serious souls, when they read such Texts of Scriptures, as speaking of new born Christians, or regenerate men, represent them to be such as are without sin, as 1 Joh. 2.9. *Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin*, and Numb. 23.21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel*: and are thereupon ready to conclude themselves not to be of Gods Israel, not to be born of God, for alas, they commit sin every day, and that not only thought sin, but word sin, and deed sin too; are strangely overtaken with it, and led captive by it; and certainly if they were truly regenerate it would be otherwise with them. I shall not

here dispute how far these Scriptures are applicable with regard to the sanctification of the people of God; it is not to be denied but that in that respect they do not so commit sin as ungodly men do; they have a principle of true holiness in them which hates it, which maintains a spiritual warfare against it, which humbles them, and leads them to godly sorrow and repentance, by reason of it; it is against their new nature, *it is no longer they that do it, but sin that dwelleth in them*, it obtains not the full consent of their whole soul: But still it is also woefully true on the other hand, that they are overtaken with sin, drawn forcibly into it; yea, they are miserably hampered with it, the oppression which they suffer from it sets them groaning, and fills their Souls with distress: holy Paul makes bitter complaint about it, *Rom. 7.* and so doth David too, though a man after Gods own heart, as we have instanced in divers Psalms: yea, they find, by reason of the body of death, that they have in them too much of love to it, liking of it, hankerings after it, and proneness to be over easily carried away with the temptations to it; which fills them with sorrowful groans under the oppressing weight of it, and bitter cries for a deliverance from it; doubtless, in

this sense ; there was a great deal of iniquity in *Jacob*, and perverseness in *Israel* at this time when God uttered this of them, otherwise they would not have been so soon led aside, and drawn away by the temptation to commit lewdness with the *Midianitish Women*, and to offer their Sacrifices unto Devils : yea the same Apostle *John*, in this very Epistle tells us, *Chap. 1. 8.* that if we say we are without sin, we ly, and the truth is not in us ; and in *Chap. 2. beginning*, he gives encouragement and direction to Believers that do sin at any time, to go to, and wait upon the *Advocate* ; so that the main and full resolution of this case, or enquiry, how the children of God may be truly said to be without sin, is by reducing it unto this head of Justification. God looks upon his *Israel*, even all those that are regenerate, not as in themselves, but as they are in *Jesus Christ* ; and because he who was their Surety was altogether without sin, he knew none, either as to pollution by it, or commission of it ; hence they are also accounted in him to have no sin ; though Sin considered in its own nature, be sin still, and it will for ever be a truth concerning Gods best Saints here upon Earth, that they did do such things every day, as deserved death ; yet Sin legally considered, ceaseth to be sin in a

Law account, when satisfaction is made for it, and a pardon is applied to the Sinner, upon which he becomes justified: now the law no more calls him a Sinner, but a Righteous person; and God as a Judge can no longer see Sin in him, because there is none that doth expose or lay him liable to a Sentence of condemnation.

3. We are hence further informed, *How deeply we stand obliged to God in thankfulness for Jesus Christ; and particularly in respect of his Righteousness.* If this be that alone upon which the foundation of our Justification is laid, everlasting praises then are his due for providing of poor man with such a Righteousness whereby he might be justified: what would have become of us all for ever, if it had not been for this? see how the Evangelical Prophet comments upon it, *Isai. 53. 6. All we like lost sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* And there are two things especially which serve to heighten the obligation that is lying upon us in this respect, viz.

1. Gods great love appearing in it to the children of men; the Evangelist sets it forth emphatically

phatically, or rather Christ himself, for they are his own words, *John 7. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.* needs must it be a love that transcends all verbal expressions or heart conceptions, that so deeply engaged the heart of the Great God in mans Salvation; as not only to give him a precious rule of happiness, and a concreated principle and power to have obeyed it, and been made happy by that Obedience, but also, when he had altogether fallen short of it by sin, and thereby subjected himself to Eternal Ruine, and had set the Righteousness of that Rule against him, to his unavoidable condemnation, now to find out a Remedy for this misery, by providing for him another Righteousness, which should compleatly answer that Rule in all its demands; and instead of letting the Curse fall upon him in its full weight, which would have crushed him down into the bottomless pit, and sunk him into endless destruction; to interpose his own Son between sinning man, and the Curse of God due for sin, to bear it off from them, by bearing of it himself, that so he being made sin for them, who knew none, they might be made the Righteousness of God through him; and that he should do all this for those that were his enemies, and had willfully

wilfully, and unreasonably revolted from him, and taken up arms of Rebellion against him: behold what manner of love God hath loved us withal, thus to do for us in our most urgent distress, the Apostle cannot chuse but chew upon it, *Rom. 5. 6. but God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us:* and that he should accept of Christ for us sinners, and accept of us in him, and do away all our sins by him, is a strange piece of unparalleld love; the world cannot exemplifie it in all its Records of humane kindness.

2. *Our infinite need, which was such as we could not possibly have done well without it;* Christ was not given for Righteousness to man in Innocency, when he had no occasion for such a benefit, being innocent in his present state, and furnished with the habits of a Righteousness of his own, by using whereof he might have fulfilled the Covenant condition, and for it stood justified before God: but it was to fallen man, when he had lost his own, and stood under the sentence of a Law that had no pity or compassion for him, but was fully engaged to his destruction; he was not given to man, when God and he was friends, and there needed

no Intercessor, but when they were enemies and there was none to take up the controversy between them, and put an end to it: when man must else unavoidably have died, and perished for ever; when he must needs have fallen in the judgment, and execution have been done upon him accordingly: and how can such an one, who hath been made the happy subject of this so glorious a privilege, ever enough celebrate the high praises of that God, who hath wrought out for him so wonderful a deliverance by Jesus Christ? what strains of thankfulness can be thought too high for him to raise his heart up unto, in the solemnization of this unspeakable gift? had he the Oratory of Angels, he could never find out expressions full enough to give it its deserved encomium, but must at length, finding of words to fail, lose himself in an extasie of silent admiration.

USE II. For Exhortation: And that,

I. In general, though more especially to Unbelievers: the counsel here is, That as we desire to stand justified before our great Judge, when we shall come to be judged by him, we labour to make sure of an undecieving title to the Righteousness of Christ by Faith in him.

him. This is the great concern of all the children of men that come within the sound of the Gospel, the main thing which all *Adams* Posterity have to be laying out after; and yet alas, how few are there among all this company, who mind or have any regard to it? It is one of the principal artifices of Satan, that great adversary of Souls, to lull men into a quiet sleep of carnal security and persuade them to live in the world altogether unconcerned about the hazardous estate of their Souls, and if possible, he will prevent them from ever so much as considering how the case is like to go with them in the great day of Accounts: whence it comes to pass, that the greatest part of this number do unhappily leave this great affair unprovided for: Or if at any time he sees men to be under some rousings and awakenings; if they begin to be a little troubled about their present state, and in fears of the issue of it; if some beams of light are darted into them, and they feel some tokens of Divine Displeasure, and think what they shall do to escape it, he will be sure to do what he can to gull them into some groundless hopes, whereby they may be cheated into a Fools Paradise, and so go on quietly in the ways of destruction, *like an Ox to the slaughter, and know not that*

it is for their lives, till it bee too late, and there be no recovery: give me leave then to offer some rousing motives, to quicken you to this work.

1. Consider, *The certainty of the great Judgment.* If it were so, that the children of men were never to come to a Tryal, it would then little concern them to enquire into their own case, or the estate of affairs between God and them, they might well enough, and with safety let all things run on without any concernedness upon their Spirits: but since there will certainly a time come wherein every Son and Daughter of Adam shall be brought forth to the Bar, and pass an exact Tryal, it must needs speak it a piece of the highest prudence in them to be most carefully providing for it, and the most manifest folly to be negligent about it; and if the Scriptures of Truth may be believed, they have given us undeniable assurance that there will be a time wherein all the world shall be Judged, and all persons in particular shall be called forth to give up their account at the Bar: see Eccles. 12. ult. *For God will bring every work to Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil,* 2 Cor. 5. 10, *For we must all appear before the Judgment*

Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things which he hath done in the body, &c. and there are many other Scriptures of the like import. So that the thing it self is indubitable; and it is an argument of horrid Atheism as well as Unbelief; for any to suspect the Truth of this assertion, as all these practically do, who do wholly neglect all manner of care to be providing for it. Remember then, that it will be but a little while, and all that are in the graves shall arise, and be gathered together unto the Judgment *when the Thrones shall be set, and the Books shall be opened,* and all the children of men that ever have been shall be judged out of them: when you and I shall, whether we will or no, be brought forth and made to stand out and appear before that awful Tribunal.

2. Consider; *Who shall then be Judge:* the Scripture sometimes ascribes this Judgment unto God, sometimes to Jesus Christ: the Apostle reconciles these two together, *Acts 17. 31. He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained.* So that God judgeth the world by Jesus Christ; and although it be a great comfort to Believers, that they shall be Judged by Christ, because

he who is their Judge, is also their Saviour, and they could not be made partakers in the imputation of his Righteousness without his knowledge, and therefore they must needs meet him in that day with great joy; yet this consideration will add no matter of comfort or hope to any other besides these, and least of all to that company that have enjoyed the Gospel, and the offers of Christ made unto them in it, and have despised it, and disobeyed: yea his being to Judge themselves to augment the terrour of all such as these, because this great Saviour hath been specially and horribly affronted by them, and therefore he hath a peculiar design of taking vengeance upon them, *2 Thes. 1. 8. in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* But yet this may awaken all to consider that if he be the Judge, we may be sure that he will proceed in exact Righteousness, and will do nothing in that affair for favour or affection, but just as mens case shall there be found to be, just so the sentence shall then undoubtedly pass upon them, *Rom. 2. 6. Who will render to every man according to his deeds, Psal. 96. ult. He shall judge the World with Righteousness, and his people with his Truth.* Know it then, That

That if you are to be judged by him, it greatly concerns you to see that your matters be good, and that more especially, as to the consideration of his exact Justice, you are to remember that he is also the *heart-searcher*, from whom nothing can be hid, *but all things are opened and manifest before him*; and therefore you had need to search into your own case, and sift it to the bottom, and see that there be no fraud or fallacy in it, for if there be, it is impossible to cover it from him, or prevent his bringing of it to light, and judging accordingly.

3. Consider, *What vast and infinite consequences depend upon this judgment*: if it were a little matter, and a thing of small moment, it were too much to be solicitously engaged about it; that is beneath the wisdom of a man to be serious about trifles: but for him altogether to neglect, or to be slighty and careless in providing for such a cause depending, whose issues are everlasting, and in which his eternal weal or woe is concerned, is folly with a witness: and such is this: consider that when you shall come to be Judged, in the last and great day, one of these two will undoubtedly be the conclusion of this affair

affair, either your condemnation, or else your Justification: there is no middle betwixt these two to be expected, your case will be found and declared to be either good or bad, and that which will come in upon either of those will be unconceivable: For

1. If it shall be your infelicity then to fall under a Sentence of Condemnation, it had been better for you that you had never been born: everlasting punishment will be the certain fruit of it, *Mat. 25. ult.* These shall go into everlasting punishment, i. e. those that shall then be found under guilt, and who can tell what that punishment contains in it? it put the Son of God into an agony, and made the man Christ to sweat clods of congealed blood to be called to enter into those lists, it made his Soul sorrowful unto the death; and shall sinners who shall be made to feel all this be better able to endure it, these dolorous shrieks, and everlasting lamentations of damned Sinners, condemned to the bottomless pit, and cast into that burning Lake of Fire and Brimstone, are doubtless to be avoided with utmost care and solicitude, by all such as have the happy advantage put into their hands so to do: and what man is there, who is in his right mind, that would not be anxiously careful to seek after an escape from the

the dint of such a Sentence, as will bind him over, and expose him to an eternal separation from the glorious presence of God, and endless suffering the merciless impressions of his everlasting fury, in that place which is on purpose prepared for the triumphs of divine vengeance over the children of perdition: and this, and nothing short of this is the inevitable consequence of the Judgment upon all such whole Cases shall be found not to be good.

2. On the other hand, If your Cause shall be right, and it shall be your happiness to receive a Sentence of ^{of} Justification at that Bar, you are not less, indeed, and may bless God with all your Souls that ever he gave you, a Being, wherein you were made capable of being one Subject of those infinite and indeterminable Glories, which that blessed Sentence shall invest you with; and your Judge shall upon the pronouncing of it, put you in possession of, who shall hereupon, not only deliver you ever from the direful Curse of the Law, which contained all miseries in it, but also exalt you to a glorious Throne, and set a mighty Crown of life upon your head; entertain you in the everlasting embraces of his ravishing affection, and make you eternally to swim in bankets, boundless and boundless.

some's Ocean of pleasures, in the presence of God, and of the Lamb; where you shall be filled and run over with fulness of loves; and what do you now say to these things; must these needs be the issues of this matter; and will you notwithstanding you are told of it, and assured of the truth and certainty of the thing, still be secure and careless about it? Shall such a cause of so infinite moment, be slighted, and let run at uncertainty; are Salvation and Damnation things so indifferent, that it is no great matter whether of them be your Lot? However you may think of these things now, I am sure you will be of another persuasion ere it be long.

4. Consider, *By what Law or Rule you shall then be judged*: that there must be some Rule upon which that affair shall proceed, is necessary, how else can there be any justice then administered: for Justice in Trials is nothing else but a proceeding with men according to that Law or Rule under which they lived: where there is no Law to command, there can be neither transgression nor righteousness; and if so, there can follow neither Condemnation nor Justification; for all these things have a necessary reference to some Law. Now it is of great use for us

to be well informed in this point, viz. what Law it is that men must be tried by in the great day: it hath been already hinted in the Explication of the Doctrine, that it was the Moral Law, or that Law which was given to *Adam* in the first Covenant, with promises and threatnings, that shall be the highest Rule of that dayes proceedings, or that unto which the judgment which shall then pass shall ultimately referr; that being the Rule of proceedings between God and Man, which was at first fixed by God himself, and is of perpetual force and must never be baulked. But that I may prevent a misunderstanding of this Assertion, give me leave here a little more to explain it: my meaning then in this point is this (and it is no other but according unto the Scriptures of God) That no man shall stand acquitted by the Judge in the day of Judgment, but only he who hath answered all the demands of the Law, either in Himself or in his Surety. Now because the bringing in of a Surety to stand in the place of the man himself, is the proper Foundation on which the Gospel Covenant is built; hence it is also a truth; that some men shall be judged by the Gospel, i. e. according as they are found in Christ, related to him, and entituled to his satisfaction.

but still, the enquiry concerning such as these also will be, whether or no the Law hath been answered by them or for them; whether the command of it hath been perfectly fulfilled, or whether the sin that hath been committed against it, hath been satisfied for, and the due deserved punishment hath been born for it? and therefore Christ saith, that *he came not to destroy the Law but fulfill it; and though Heaven and Earth shall pass, yet the law shall stand, Mat. 5. 17, 18.* yea when the heavens are past as a scroll, & folded up as a Garment, this Word of God shall endure. There are too many that indulge themselves with a fond expectation, that there shall be some more remiss and easie rule of trial brought in at that day; because Jesus Christ is the Judge but they wofully deceive themselves: God is of one mind, the Rule given to Man and under which he Covenanted, is an unchangeable Rule. There is indeed a way which infinite Wisdom hath found out, and made the discovery of, whereby a sinful Man may be made able to stand the dint of that Trial, and be justified in it; and this indeed is the great glory of the Gospel, that it hath made such a discovery as this is, even a way in which mercy may be agreed with Justice, in and by Jesus Christ: but there is no way to

avoid this Trial: the Law Book is one of those Books that must and will be opened in order to that solemn Process which shall be made in the day of Accounts, and there will be no waving of it.

5. Consider from hence, *That you must have a Righteousness, and not only so, but such an one as will fully answer the Law too, if ever you hope to be justified at that day*: it is a vain thing for any men to pretend to an hope, that they shall do well enough then, and yet never concern themselves about the getting of a Righteousness that may then stand to answer for them: there are many that plead God is merciful, and they feed themselves up with fond hopes, that he will have pity upon and not reject the works of his hands, and this is all they have to comfort themselves with in the contemplation of the day of reckoning: but this is an empty Plea; Justice is one of his Attributes as well as mercy, and he will not be merciful any farther than as he can be just too: and further, remember, it is a Court of Judgment where you must stand, and a Bar of Justice at which you must plead; and if you be not found to have a righteous cause then, all the Pleas for Mercy which you can make will be too late: for the present indeed it is a precious day of Grace, and

in it Jesus Christ is sitting upon a Throne of Grace, and the humble prostrate confessions of true Penitents may avail for sinners, with him who now delights in mercy; and if men would be perswaded to embrace this opportunity, and improve it in making of their peace with him, it would be well for them: but when once he comes to sit upon the exalted Throne of Judgment, and shall put on righteousness for a Garment, the case will then be altered, and if you shall upon Examination be found too light, there will be no more room for repentance.

6. Consider, *There is no other Righteousness to be found, but only that of Christ, that can or will satisfy the demands of justice for you.* This truth hath been sufficiently evidenced in the opening of the Doctrine; only be here perswaded to meditate and ponder seriously upon it: There will be no appearing then under a covering of your own making, it will be too short, and too narrow, and too dirty to stand you in any stead: if you should wash your selves with Nitre, and rake much Sope, and be at a great deal of pains, yet all will not cleanse you from your spots, or rinse off those blemishes which you have cleaving unto you, which are like the *Leopard's Spots*, and *Ethiopians blackness*: there

is no man that can make his heart clean; and if our own personal Righteousness be too short to do this for us, it is certain that there is no relative Righteousness to be heard of, which will suffice, but only that of Christ: there is none else which hath such an intrinsic worth in it, as to be able so to merit for us; for that which so doth, must be an *everlasting Righteousness*: & if there were any other such, as in truth there is not, yet there is none other which God hath declared his acceptance of, without which, we criminals can never plead Justice for our acquittance and deliverance from condemnation upon another score; this therefore, and none but this will be of any worth to us, when we come to make our plea for our lives: and therefore it is of most momentous concern that we use utmost endeavours to get entituled unto this. For,

7. Consider, *That it is not sufficient that there is such a Righteousness of Christ, and that the report of it hath been made unto you, and you have heard of it, except you have also made it yours by believing on him*; there are thousands in the world who have heard this report, and possibly have given a literal assent, and historical credit to the truth of it, who shall yet notwithstanding go for ever without

out the benefit of it ; and that because they did not apprehend and close in with it by a living faith, they did not throw themselves upon it, and renouncing every other object of trust, place their whole confidence in it : It is not the Righteousness of Christ talked of, or highly commended, but savingly believed in, that will stand men in any stead, and do them a kindness indeed, There is no doubt but the Devils do believe the Truth of the Gospel, they confessed Christ when he was on Earth, to be the Son of God ; but this profits them not ; this general faith is the undoing of multitudes : Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, he died to satisfy Divine Justice for such, and therefore they hope that they shall escape condemnation, and be admitted into his favour, and be justified upon this meer account, but yet they never had the impressions of a saving work of grace wrought upon their Souls, whereby they were brought over to cast themselves upon him by a lively faith, or were enabled to betake themselves to him alone, in an utter renunciation of every other trust of their Souls, they never embraced his Righteousness, and that only to be their security against the thundering menaces of the Law ; and so all their hopes, how strong and satisfying

lying (ever they may seem to be, and what ever comfort and content they may take in them, do prove but as the spiders web; for God hath firmly restrained Gospel Salvation to believing, *John 3. 36. He that believes on the Son of God, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall never see life.*

2. Consider, *This Righteousness of Christ is freely held forth and offered unto you in the Gospel;* yea, the Lord Jesus Christ is earnestly soliciting and wooing of you to accept of it: it will therefore be your own fault if at last you shall go without it: God himself hath provided it, Jesus Christ hath wrought it out, and there now wants nothing else but your cordial accepting of it to make it yours; and if now after all this you shall be so foolish as carelessly to neglect it, or wilfully to reject it, and are thereupon found in the last day to be without it, how bitter and heart piercing a reflection must it needs be for you to remember, that once there was a time when Jesus Christ offered himself to you, to be your security against the wrath of God, and the curses of his holy Law, yea pressed you, and with great solicitation entreated you to accept of him as such, and waited long upon you, as one loth to receive a denial at your hands, and yet

yet you scorned him, and made light of him: know then and be assured, that this Righteousness of Christ, is so presented in the Gospel offer, that it is made sure for every one that comes within the reach of the publication of it, and feels in himself an absolute necessity of it, and is made willing to accept of it upon Gospel terms; and they are no other but an hearty forsaking of every others object of trust or affiance which men have ignorantly and foolishly chosen to themselves, and a casting themselves wholly upon Christ, for peace with God, and all his other concomitant benefits: and I am here once more in Gods name solemnly to acquaint you with this message; That although you have many, and many a time despised, and set it at naught, though you have stoppt your ears against it, and desperately refused to hearken to these fair terms but have chosen rather to go without it, then part with the least lust only for the sake of it; it yet may be made yours, there is a possibility still of obtaining it, if so be that you have any heart unto it; and do therefore entreat you by the love which you bear to your immortal Souls, and desires you have not to be cast in the Judgment and so lost for ever, that you do no more
put

put it away from you, lest for so doing you come to rue it eternally, and confess your madnes, when there is no reparation; where every refuge of lies, and hiding place of deceit shall be laid level, as they certainly will in that day, when he shall lay judgment to the line and Righteousnesse to the Plummer.

9. Consider the daily danger you go in till you are justified: did sinners but know how many mischiefs they lye open to, what infinite hazzards they run every moment, as long as they continue strangers to the Righteousnes of Christ, it would surely either drive them to doleful despair, or else forcibly put them upon it to make it their first work, to seek after the obtaining of it with the utmost diligence: and what saith Christ himself, *John 3. 18. He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* The sentence of the Law is already past, that the Soul that sins, that Soul shal dye: guilt and a curse are now upon you, and they hold you in such fetters as are indissoluble by any created power whatsoever, and keep you fast for that woful execution which God will come ere long to do upon all those who shall be found held under that condemnation; and it is Gods meer patience which presents

presents you a present reprieve, but for which you had long ere this felt the weight of his hand; and remember that this also is only *durante bene placito*: rich mercy hath also exalted this day of patience into a day of grace, wherein there is offered an opportunity, together with the means of making your peace, and getting reconciled unto God, but how long that shall last is only known unto him, who hath all our times in his hand, and as he do but once give the word, it ends in that very moment; and if you shall go down into the grave unjustified, being naked for want of Christs Righteousness to cover you, you will never more have and offer of it made unto you throughout eternity: and then, when the powerful word of God, shall awaken your drowsy dust, and re-unite your separated Souls and Bodies, and the dreadful sound of the last Trumpet, shall alarm and hasten you to the terrible Tribunal, how will you be able in that day to look *into* Christ in the face whom you have thus wilfully despised? how will you weary the mountains, and tire the hills with fruitless cries and entreaties to cover and hide you from the presence of the Lamb, in the great day of his indignation? with what pale faces, and ghastly countenances, and trembling joynt, will

will you stand to hear your selves examined, judged and condemned; and with what horrid roarings and shriekings will you drop down into the bottomless gulph, where you must receive double damnation, not onely for being without, but also for refusing to accept of Christ and his Righteousness? now there is a precious price in your hands, and as fair opportunity for the preventing of all this, if a Saviour may but find welcome, and you are but indeed willing to accept of him as he is offered in the Gospel: oh, be perswaded to make haste, give all diligence to get in to him, before the doom that is past, be put in execution.

If now there be any soul that is moved with these things, and doth with seriousness make the enquiry; *how shall a wretched condemned sinner come to make sure of an unfailing interest in the Righteousness of Christ?* or how shall I obtain that Justifying Faith by which it is apprehended and received? To such an enquirer I would answer, that you can do nothing for your selves by your own Strength, but you are in sence of your utter impotency, to be looking to and waiting upon God in Christ, for his Spirit and Grace, and that in a way of diligent attendance upon all the ways which are of his appointment

ment, and in the which he hath been wont to come and bless; and in this way there are two things requisite to be found in you, if ever you hope to have a sure claim to this great privilege, viz.

I. You must be wholly broken off from, and utterly reject all trust or confidence in your own Righteousness: The Righteousness of Christ is not provided for, or applied unto righteous persons, but sinners: his medicine is not prepared to be administered to those that are sound and whole, but such as are sick of sin, Luk. 9. 11. this is not spoken, as if we were to conceive that any of Adams children are in themselves whole and righteous, no, the contagion of sin hath fallen upon every one of the race, that is born into the world by natural generation: but it is to let us know, that there are a great many who have still a fond conceit of themselves, as vainly to think they are sound enough, righteous enough, sufficiently able to do for themselves and as long as they are of this opinion, they are strangers to the righteousness of Christ. This is the great thing which the Spirit of God hath to do with poor sinners, in order to the bringing of them unto a Saviour, to empty them of their self conceitedness, and high opinions of their own abilities and worth, and

and it is a far easier thing to convince men of the error of their wickedness, and to drive them to their performance of legal duties, and their reformations, then (after they have taken up a course of these, and to their own apprehension much profited in them) to remove them from, and destroy their carnal confidence in them. This is the great stumbling block that lies between conviction of sin, and true Conversion: there are very few (if any) of Sinners that have been awakened with the Law, and so far wrought upon by it, as to think some thing must be done to get rid of the Curse of it, but turn in here first, and try what is to be done by legal repentances, and endeavour to establish a Righteousness of their own, and the misery is, the greatest number of sober Professors take up and tarry here, and can be gotten no farther; and so they perish at last: for the destruction of men is equally unavoidable, either by being drowned in the wide sea of prophaneſs, or being swallowed up in the lands of a legal Righteousness: here therefore for your help in this case, let me speak to three things.

1. *How far a man may be said to trust in his own Righteousness.*

2. *What*

2. What may be helpful to break a sinner off from this vain confidence?

3. By what discoveries we may be assured that it is broken?

11. How far a man may be said to trust in his own Righteousness? This is well to be considered, for there be many who think that they are gotten off from this, when as indeed they are not; and so they please themselves with their own deceivings. It is hardly to be thought that any who have lived all their time under the clear light of the Gospel, should be so far deluded, as wholly to deny any dependance upon the Grace of God, or to think that they can of themselves make satisfaction to a righteous Law for the sin they are guilty of: and you shall find none but if it be asked of them, will readily acknowledge that they have some need of, and use for Christ; and this shallow acknowledgment makes them presently to conclude in themselves, that they are not the legalists, or self confident men that are here pointed at: but you must know that if there be any self reliance in this point, if in any respect you look upon your own doings serviceable to procure you the favour of God in Christ, this lies at a block in your way. Now besides these (if there be any such) who suppose

themselves of themselves able to do so as to merit eternal life; there are others also who do really lean upon their legal Righteousness for Justification; and they are such as these.

1. *All those that dare not come to Christ in their sins for his mercy; but they must have some reformation, and some specious duties of their own laid in, to bring with them, before they can come to him; and when they suppose themselves to have gotten something of that kind, now they can from thence take heart, and by looking upon them take some confidence in them coming.* This very thing manifestly discovers that men are not as yet fitted for the Gospel dispensation of Grace; for that bids men to come in their unworthiness, and when they have nothing at all of theirs to commend them to God; but these must have some worthiness for which they may be received, or else they dare not to adventure; and though men here plead for evangelicall works, as those which they only design; viz. they have a desire to be more humbled, they are not sufficiently abased in themselves; they would be more penitent, they have not sufficiently grieved for, nor enough mourned by reason of sin, and they would faint wait till they have gotten a little more of this, and they will come; this will not fit them; for

let the enquiry be made, what is all this for? why do they not dare to come to Christ in the present state, but must wait for these dispositions? why thus it is, they are afraid that Christ will not accept of them, such as they are, but if they were thus or so, could but find in themselves these desired frames, then they should have encouraging hopes, that he would bid them welcom; and here is a trusting in their own Righteousness so far as to hope that they may without Christ get something that may commend them to him for his Righteousness: and though it is certain that God in converting a sinner, doth so far make discoveries of him to himself, as to let him see his absolute need of a Saviour, else he would never believe in him for Salvation; yet these are alwayes not soul filling, but soul emptying discoveries, and till men can come plumply up to practice as the Publican, and say with him, *Luk. 18. 13. Lord be merciful to me a Sinner*, finding nothing but sin in themselves, looking for all mercy to derive from his undeserved favour and good will, they are not gotten so clear of their own, as to be ready to rely on the Righteousness of Christ alone.

2. *They whose hopes and comforts are men-*
K 2 *sured*

sured by their enlargements or straitnings in Duty. I know it is the duty of every Child of God to pray to him for Enlargements, and to mourn under Straitnings, his care to live to the Glory of God, and desire to lay himself out to the utmost for the promoting of it, will engage him to this: but when these are made the measure of mens confidence and comfort; when they are carried forth, and find an apprehended fulness of Spirit in their duties, they are now lifted up, and abundantly satisfied in their justified state, and Gods favourable acceptance of them; but if at any time they find a flagging of these, and they drive heavily in Duty, now their hopes also fail them, and they begin to call all in question, and doubt about it: such men do evidently place too much upon their own Righteousness, thinking that it is this which ingratiate them with God; and though there is too much of this frame in such as are justified, by reason of the remains of a legal Spirit which are in them: yet it is too often an Argument of a vain trust, and sign of one that hath not been broken off from himself: and how much of this was to be observed in that unjustified Pharisee? *Luk. 18, 17.* he doth not thank God for Jesus Christ but only for his attainments and enlargements.

3. Such as acknowledge professedly all they have to be of Grace, and yet do look upon it that they are through Grace enabled to do that themselves which stand for their Justification, at least in part: There are a great many who can speak high in the commendation of rich and free Grace; but what Grace is it that they make so much talk of? not that which hath provided us with a Righteousness in another; but that which hath provided us with a Sanctification in our selves; in the exerring whereof, through the renewing of the Spirit, we are enabled to merit the favour of God: and although Christ hath made satisfaction for our sins, and born our hell for us, yet still we may earn heaven by what we do; though yet we would not rob God of the Glory of this, but pay him this honourable acknowledgment, that we received it from him, (and so did Adam, his Original Righteousness with which he was to have earned his happiness) and that without him we can do nothing: but let it be made as fair and plausible as men will, and lickt up into the best shape they can put it into; still it is to trust in our own Righteousness, i. e. a Righteousness inheret which is destructive to the way of Gospel Justification, which calls us off to a Righteousness without us, to one that must be imputed

to us for our acceptance into Gods favour.

4. Such as think it hard and injurious to them that their own duties and performances are no more regarded and rewarded by God. Some there be who are very diligent, and take much pains in the attendance upon duties both ordinary and extraordinary; and they make a great deal of do in the formalities of Religion; and this notwithstanding though they read, hear, pray, follow their callings, abstain from the common sins of the times and places, &c. yet God seems to take but a little notice of them; he doth not in his providence gratifie them in all these things that they desire and ask of him, but they meet with many crosses, afflictions, disappointments; and this angers and discontentes them, and they fret at it, charge God with hard dealing, and think themselves not a little injured by his Providence; and hereupon they begin to murmur, and call him to an account; thus did they, *Isai. 58. 3.* *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our Souls, and thou takest no knowledg?* this also is the discovery of a legal Spirit, an heart not broken off from self; it shews that men set a price, a value upon their own doings, when they think that God undervalues them if he do not for them

them & gratifie their desires in every point: now all these you must get off from, if ever you would be priviledged with a right and title to the Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

2. For help to break this confidence, I shall only offer these two Directions: *Long at*

1. *Labour and pray hard for a right discovery of the Law of God, and be frequent in the comparing of your selves by it.* The most of men have entertained carnal conceptions about the Law, and that occasions their taking up of confiding thoughts in themselves: they have not made a discovery of the exceeding great latitude of it, and that makes them to think it an easie matter to pay all observance to it: and when men are thus perswaded, they can live very well satisfied in themselves: whereas a clear beam of this light darted into their Consciences, would be a Thunderbolt to them, and strike them down dead: what saith Paul? Rom. 7. 9. *I was alive without the Law once: but when the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died.* It killed his Pride, and Self-conceitedness. The right understanding, and impartial application of the Law of God to our selves, will bring us to take up other kinds of thoughts about our selves, and about our duties, then formerly we were wont to have: it will make known

unto us the great imperfection that there is in our best, that when we have done all we are unprofitable; and the sin that cleaves to them; yea and it will convince us of our personal impotency to the doing of that which is good; it will shew in the wandrings of our hearts, the deadness of our affections, the many stains and spots that are upon our clearest performances; this light rightly used will shew us all, and enforce us to confess the utter impossibility of our standing a Trial before the all-seeing Judge under this shelter; because we shall have the clearest evidence, that if the Law be that according to which we must be tried, it will certainly Cast and Condemn us.

2. *Be perswaded and assured, that as long as you do either for the whole, or for any part of your Justification place your trust in your own Righteousness, Christ will never offer you his to justify you:* There is no dividing or parting of stakes in this matter: Christ is resolved, that he will either be a whole Saviour, or none at all; there shall no person or thing come in to share with him in the honour of this, but he will do the whole work, and he will have the whole glory of it: man must be utterly lost, before he will come to seek him up, he must be a bankrupt, a beggar, a pro.

prodigal that hath spent all, and hath not an husk to live upon, before he will entertain him : It is therefore one part of the work of the Spirit whom Christ sends, to convince the world of Righteousness, *John 16. 9. i. e.* firstly of the Righteousness of the Law in all its demands and sentences, that it requires nothing, and that it threatens nothing but what is according to the strictest equity, and there can be no fault found with it ; and then of the only Righteousness of Jesus Christ, that is able to answer both the commands and menaces of the Law : that, that and no other is fitted up to respond for man to the Law. They therefore who come to Jesus Christ must deny themselves, and abjure every thing of their own, or he will none of them : so that as long as men have in their apprehension a way of their own Righteousness, they are too many to be saved by him : and the truth is, to believe in Christ alone for Justification, is altogether inconsistent with a mans having any confidence in the flesh. If then you account it a matter of any moment to be found having a righteous cause at that day ; and when you have examined your selves, and made proof of your own hearts and lives, and upon trial found by experience, that you are altogether

ther defective of a personal Righteousness to that end, you here see what it is that is incumbent on you to do, *i. e.* you must trample upon all your own rags, throw them off as filthy and noisome things; let them be so to you, and then think how much more they are so to God, and now come as naked to Christ as ever you were born: and to the naked and destitute it is, that he makes the offers of these white Robes of his own Righteousness, which shall hide all their spots cover all their imperfections, and present them clear of all offence, so that Justice it self must needs acquit and justify them.

But you may say, *how shall I know whether I have thus utterly rejected mine own Righteousness?* and if there be so vast a dependance upon this matter, it is of infinite consequence to be rightly informed in the truth of this conclusion, and this brings me to the next, *viz.*

3. To give some discoveries whereby we may know *when this trust is broken*, in a few particulars.

1. *When all our duties, even the very best that we do, help to make us more humble, and more vile on our own eyes:* trust in, and conceitedness of duties go always together; and so much as we are lifted up in our own conceits

ceits by the review of what we have been doing, so far we confide in it: but when not only our sins serve to abase us before God, and lay us in the dust before him, but those very duties wherein we are most conscientious in obeying God, do by our looking upon them, help to make us see what worthless nothings we are: when we gather up out of every one of them something to make us see how little cause there is why God should look towards us, and to wonder at his rich condescendency to accept of any thing at our hands: and this is a good token of Humiliation: Thus it was with David, after that large contribution was made towards the building of the Temple, 2 Chron. 29. 13, 14. *We thank thee, and praise thy glorious name, but who am I? and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?* and the Church, Isa. 64. 6. *we all are as an unclean thing, and our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, every prayer, every Sabbath, every Ordinance in which we attend, do all help to let us see how unworthy we are of Gods favour; how full of death, and of a body of death, we are; and that there is and can be nothing in us, that can commend in any wise unto God.*

2. *When we do duty without any the least*
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aim to procure our Justification by it, but only as a practical Testimony of our thankfulness unto God for Jesus Christ and his righteousness which is given us for our Justification; when we say after all according to our Saviours direction, Luk. 17. 10. we are unprofitable servants, and have done but our duty; resolving in our own hearts that this that we have done cannot be the procuring cause of Gods favour, or of Christs application of himself to us, and therefore we lay all such thoughts aside: nor is it our motive to drive us to duty, that so we may obtain it; vain men are ready to think that Christ hath more reason to look towards them, and love them, better than others: because they do more for him, and are more careful in serving of him: but an humble soul, being fully satisfied that he can never do any thing that can oblige God to him, any further than he will mercifully accept of him, would fain order his life and conversation always after such a manner, as that he may give a clear testimony of his cordial gratitude to God, and therefore all his own Obedience is only the Sacrifice of praise.

3. When our best duties drive us to Christ for his Righteousness; those very things where in we give the clearest evidence to the world of

of our being the Servants of God, yea and wherein we have the fullest witness in our own consciences to our sincerity, yet these tell us, and we read in and from them, that except Christ spread his skirt over us, and sprinkle our Sacrifices with his blood, they will condemn us; there are many who when their sins stare them in the face, and the apprehension of the wrath of God which is denounced against them; puts them into a fright, and they are afraid lest vengeance should overtake them, are now driven with great amazement to call upon Christ, and implore his pardon; but if they can keep clear of notoriously scandalous and conscience wasting sins, they are little apprehensive of their need of the blood of sprinkling to be applied to them, and their duties: but when a man is truly broken off from his own Righteousness, his duties will drive him as fast to Christ, for the imputation of his Righteousness, as the other mans sins will do, so it was with Paul in our Text: and thus of the first direction:

2. *If you would close in with Christ by such a Faith as shall indeed justify you, you must in it embrace and accept of whole Christ in all his Offices. If you would have him to be your Righteousness, you must take him also to be your*

your *Wisdom* and your *Sanctification*: there are multitudes that make a great pretence to have closed in with Christ in his *Priestly Office*; they have been convinced of the breach of peace that hath been made *between* God and them, and the wrath that is out against them, which they are afraid of, and earnestly desirous that they may be delivered from it, and hereupon they would have him to be their attonement or reconciler to God, to satisfy the demands of Justice upon their accounts, and procure them pardon and peace with God, and are mightily taken with the notion they have entertained about him as such an one, and highly commend him for this great work of Redemption, in procuring a rescue from condemnation, and delivery from hell and eternal miseries which otherwise the sinful children of men must needs have undergone: and they would fain persuade themselves to rely upon this, and take him under such a consideration, and finding something like a consent to it, which they take for faith, they are hereupon ready to think that it is theirs; and now they are delivered from their great fears, the bitterness of death is past, they have an High Priest who is entred into the Holy of Holies for them; and for all this, if those men would

would but look a little closer into their own hearts, they shall find that they have not as yet been brought unto a willing consent to part with their own ways and courses, or to submit themselves to his *Prophetical and Kingly Office*: they lean to their own wisdom, and will follow their own directions, his commands, at least all of them, do not please them; they cannot yield a full compliance with his *preceptive will*, and they rise up against his *Providential will*: and allow themselves a liberty of following the edicts and advice of their own hearts: But be assured, that these two always go together, and they that will not have him to reign over them, shall never enjoy him as a Saviour unto them, they both go hand in hand, *Acts 5. 31. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.* There are two things which obstruct mans happiness, and till they are both of them removed from him, he remains altogether hopeless of it, viz. his guilt and his pollution: the former hath armed the Law against him to his condemnation, and the latter hath made him actually and habitually miserable: the taking away of any one of these singly is not enough to make him happy, if the other do not remain behind: for upon the supposal of his being par-

pardoned, if still he be detained under the de-
 filement and dominion of Sin, he is under
 the greatest evil, and by reason thereof is ex-
 tremely miserable; and cannot get to *heaven*
 that place of blessedness, *Rev. 21. 27. into it*
there shall enter nothing that defileth or worketh
abomination; and likewise if he be sanctified,
 and not pardoned, he must still be unhappy,
 if a curse of death can make him so: Christ
 therefore, that he might be a compleat Savi-
 our, and able to save to the uttermost, had all
 his Offices put upon him; and all such as
 hope to be found saved by him, must accept
 of him in them all: and hence it follows, that
 whosoever he be that truly believes in him for
 pardon, doth also lay hold upon him for his
 sanctifying grace, and together with his tak-
 ing shelter under his Priestly Office, for the
 obtaining of Gods favour to be extended to
 him, doth also put himself under his Pro-
 phetical and Kingly Office, that he may
 be savingly enlightened in the way of
 truth, and have his sin mortified, his soul
 and body cleansed throughout, according
 to, *Isa. 25. 24. In the Lord we shall have*
Righteousness and Strength; and till you
 are come thus far, you do but in vain
 expect to be the better for his Righteous-
 ness; but as for those who have made
 Christ

Christ their all, they shall find him to be all to them.

2. The Exhortation is in the next place to all such in particular as have believed in Jesus Christ; that have indeed taken him for their Saviour, and their whole hope is placed upon him. Here are two words of counsel to these.

1. Let the consideration of this Doctrine direct and teach you the right way how to answer all the evils and accusations of Satan and your own misgiving hearts, that at any time do offer to give you disquietment, and that is, be sure to keep the eye of your Faith alwayes firmly fixt upon the true and proper ground of your Justification. Satan is often making his assaults upon the people of God, and endeavouring to disrest them, and that by endeavouring to puzzle them with doubts about their state of reconciliation to God: yea and our own relenting hearts are exceeding ready to be hurried into the Temptation, and be exceedingly molested with fears and jealousies about it: and that which usually is the main reason of our being in such perplexity is, because we look off from that which is the true and only bottom of all our hope, upon some other thing which hath not strength enough in it to bear it up: whereas if the people of God could keep their eyes firmly fixt upon

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Jesus Christ, and his righteousness, and keep open a clear discovery of their particular interest in it, this would afford them at all times argument enough to confute, and put all that they can say to silence: what is it that he can alledge to overthrow our Consolation, but may with this be beaten back? he will be ready to tell us that we are sinners, and for that reason are righteously condemned according to the tenure of a just Law, but from this ground we have that to answer that we are without sin in Christ, and are made righteous in Gods account, by vertue of his perfect obedience, believed in by us, and reputed to be ours by our Judg. It may be he will clamour against us, and say that we never did fulfil the Law of God, and so are altogether incapable of making any fair and rational Plea to the being possessed of the good and blessedness therein promised, only to such as do fully do all that is there commanded, but contrarily must needs fall under the sentence of eternal death which is out against all Law-breakers, because by our transgression we have certainly brought ourselves under it, and how shall we think to escape it? but we have here also to reply for our selves, that although to us personally all this is true, yet as we are considered in our surety, who never was chargeable with any failure

Failure either in point of performance of what the Law enjoined us, or of satisfaction by suffering whatsoever it threatned in way of penalty, so we have fully and in all points answered the Law: that in him we have never transgressed it, neither in thought word nor deed, because he never did, and that there can be nothing due from us to the Law in way of satisfaction, except it can be made to appear (as it never can) that the great sufferings of the Son of God in our nature, were insufficient to make reparation to the wrath of God; for what we poor sinners were to have suffered from it: He will urge us with the consideration of the rigor and severity of Gods Justice, and how impossible it is for us to answer it, who are able to do nothing at all, but what Justice must needs find a flaw in, and condemns us for; and how can we take any comfort in such things as these are? but we have still to reply that Christ in our name and stead stood at the Bar of Justice, and there he answered for us, to all the demands that it was able to make of him; that he delivered himself freely up into its hands, and let it do its pleasure upon him, he continued under it, and bare all the impressions of the rigor of it, until such time as Justice it self said it had full satisfaction, and could make no further demands.

of him, but set him at full liberty, and gave him an honourable discharge in his Resurrection: he will be often scaring of us with calling us to consider the holiness of God, and his truth, and thence also picking up something which may weaken this our hope in respect of our Justification by Christ, how is it possible that he who hates sin with so perfect an hatred, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, should yet let such a wretched Sinner go out of his hands, and yet be unsported? yea, and how can he be a true God, and yet declare us to be righteous who are unrighteous, or say that he finds no iniquity or perverseness in us, when we are full of it, and there is hardly any thing else in us? but the answer is yet ready at hand; that although Gods Holiness forbids that he should baulk his Justice, or lose the honour of that so precious an Attribute, yet notwithstanding he can accept of another in exchange for the Sinner; provided he who is received in exchange be of sufficiency to answer what is required, and there be no loss in that respect; and he can receive satisfaction at the hands of a Surety; and when he hath executed his Justice upon him, and taken all the revenges upon him which the Law was to have done upon the principal; now what rational Argument can possibly be alledged, why he may

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not without any the least wound to his Honour, pass a Pardon upon him, for whom all this hath been done to procure him one? But there needs no disputing here, about the right of the thing, for it tends only to bring us to Atheism, and possess us with such thoughts about God, which carry in them a denying of him to be God, viz. that he is not Holy, nor Just, nor True; for it is certain that God hath done all this already, and you may silence all from your own experience, he hath declared it to you, he hath given you the witness of it, as in his Word, so also in your own Soul; and therefore let him vindicate his own name from such imputations, and he both can and will, Thus may a Child of God find the righteousness of Christ to be a refuge from the Tempest.

2. This may also direct you to the right way to keep up and maintain peace in your own Consciences: Gods People are oftentimes much put out of order, and find abundance of trouble in the reflexions of their minds within them; and the usual reason of it is because they do not make that use of Christs Righteousness which they ought to do, they do not improve their Justification up to the height: Peace within a mans self is a wonderful blessing, and happy is that man who enjoys it, and can live upon it; and this peace, it is be of the

right kind, and that which will hold out, hath its foundation in our Justification by Faith in Jesus Christ: this is the proper ground of all inward solid peace, *Rom 5 1. Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* There is in the first place peace with God, and then consequent upon that, is peace in a mans Conscience, which is an inward quietness settled in the soul of a true Believer, arising from a saving reliance upon the Righteousness of Christ, as that which shall answer the Law for us, shall deliver us from the curse and condemnation of it, and also bestow on us all the felicity which is revealed in the new Covenant, and treasured up in all these precious promises which are therein revealed. A Believers peace of Conscience, hath not its dependance upon any worth or worthiness of his own, but upon Gods promise, Christs merit, and his assured interest in it: how much then doth it concern every serious soul to labour after this? considering that just so much as we attain unto of it, just so much of freedom we enjoy from a spirit of bondage; and so much of liberty, and spiritual freedom in the cheerful serving of God: this is it which helps us with a quiet and sedate spirit pursue the business we have to do in our Generation, and which affords us holy boldness to make our near approaches

proaches to the Throne of Grace, to ask the help of God in all our concerns, and to leave all our requests before him with the greatest confidence: yea, and it also greatly helps to sweeten all both mercies and afflictions that we meet with in our whole Pilgrimage; and that because he that knows that the one are the tokens of a Fathers kindness, and the other the discoveries of his fidelity, and bot- tomed with love, from whence it follows of necessity that they shall in the working of them be made serviceable to our best good: and what can give more help to this satisfy- ing and settling our minds in all the changes and conditions which pass over our heads in this life? Now if we would be sure to keep and uphold this peace within, in the midst of all the various disquietments which we may encounter both from without and with- in, but from sin, and Satan, and the World: we must be alwayes getting and keeping clear the evidence of our interest in Jesus Christ and his Righteousness: and not that only but also the apprehension and confi- dence of the sufficiency which there is in it, and our relation to it, to answer fully all those ends of it, for which we have embraced it: we must therefore labour for a distinct disco- very of the fulness and perfection of it in itself: that it is that which hath enough in it to an-

Y^ere Justice for all those who do rely upon it: the acceptableness also of it unto God, how well pleased he is with it, and hath thereupon given all his chosen ones credit for it, and on that account hath already in their surety given them a discharge; and being satisfied in these points, and having also a witness in our Souls, that it is indeed ours; Now we have relief enough against the soul sinking discouragement offered from the reflexion upon, and consideration of our daily infirmities, and sometimes greater transgressions, which in an hour of Temptation we are too forcibly hurried into, and for which conscience is disturbed, and oftentimes ready to fly in our faces, and draw up not only heavy accusations against us, but pass a sentence of condemnation upon us: here only can we at such a time find relief and settlement: It is not all our confessions, repentances, satisfactions, hanging down of our heads, and going softly, that will of themselves give us the least ground of true confidence, (though there must be repentance too, or else there is not true faith, these graces being inseparable) but still when we fail never so much, and every thing we do is far short of the command of the Law; this Righteousness abides, and the virtue of our being in Christ by Faith, still keep up
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our justified estate, though we may be liable to many rebukes in Gods Providence.

USE III. *For everlasting consolation to all such as have truly laid hold upon the Righteousness of Christ by faith in him; for such as have fled from the Law to the Gospel, have utterly renounced themselves, and repaired to Jesus Christ; who having found themselves to be guilty condemned sinners, have betaken themselves unto, and harboured in Christ as a powerful and sufficient Saviour, and have reposed the whole trust and confidence of their souls in him; let all such happy souls rejoice, and be right glad, the Apostle tells us that there is strong consolation for such as have fled to this refuge, and cast anchor here; Heb. 6. 18, 19 and the Psalmist with a full mouth declares all such to be blessed ones, Psal. 32. 1, 2. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity: I might here expatiate in setting forth the great happiness of such men: but let me say in one word, they are in a most safe condition. if you have thus believed, you are then in Christ Jesus, and you shall be found in him, and being so, you are delivered from all grounded fear of evil, and have reason to expect to partake in all needful good: briefly, that you are every way as safe as can be desired, for*

1. *You are out of the danger of condemnation.* Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore no more condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* The Son of God in your nature, and standing in the place of a Surety for you, hath been arraigned, tried, condemned and slain; Justice hath done all to him which it had threatned you withal, so that you are now out of the danger of all the menaces of the Law, the accusations of Satan and whatever charge there may be brought in against you, Rom. 8. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died.* Your condemnation is over, the punishment threatned you is past, and there now remains nothing but a glorious acquittance, and open declaration of the righteousness of your cause.

2. *The world can do you no harm, nor all the charges that you lie liable to in it;* they may give you a great deal of outward molestation; they may pervert Justice, and condemn you as wicked persons, they may rifle your houses, imprison your persons, take away your lives, and remove you from off the face of the earth, yea and make you the scorn of men, and expose your names to slanders and obloquie; but here lyes your comfort in the midst of all this, when they have done their worst, and vented their spleen shall

with the greatest bitterness, yet they can never take away your righteousness, but that shall abide for ever, being laid out of the reach of their malice, nor can they overturn you in your great cause, or ever separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus: Principalities and Powers have not any power so far to reach you to your harm, Rom. 8. 38, 39.

3. Your many weaknesses and infirmities cannot undermine or subvert your safety: they cannot destroy or break the peace that is made in Christ between God and you; they may, if fallen into through neglect of duty, and remissness in your spiritual watch, procure you the displeasure of a father, discovering himself in his chastizing of you with affliction: but can never alienate his heart from you, though your grace be faint, and your corruptions strong, though your strength be made weak in the way, and there be many Temptations which do assault and wound you, though you can offer to God nothing in any duty that is worth his acceptance and favour, but you falter and stagger at every step you take, and sometimes also fall down and break your bones, which puts you to a great deal of pain and sorrow, and may make you to lie in of it for a great while, before you recover either your former strength or

or comfort; yet still all shall be well at the last: Jesus Christ your advocate is pleading for you, and presenting the merit of his righteousness on your account, though you sin through frailty, and the prevalency of the Law in your members, that carries you captive, you may yet humbly go to him, and chat with great confidence, for the renewed seal of your pardon, and this Advocate is ready to sue them out for you, and to bestow the witness and comfort of them upon you, when you come to him for it,

4. *Neither need the greatness or numerousness of your former sins distract or affright you: these need not to make you afraid that God will reject you, if you have Christs Righteousness engaged for you, that is as big as your unrighteousness, look upon it with all the aggravations you can: and what need you then be terrified? God hath imputed it unto you, and in so doing, he hath made all your sins to be as if they had never been, they are concealed, they are sunk into the depths, they are lost, and quite out of sight for ever doing you a displeasure any more: See how fully the Lord declares himself in his word, concerning all those that have betaken themselves to, and sought shelter under the Righteousness of Christ, Isa. 1. 18. though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be*

red like crimson, they shall be as wool, chap. 43. 25. I, even I am he who blottereth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins, cap. 44. 22. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy Transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins, Jer. 50. 10. In those dayes and at that time saith the Lord the iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I restore: and what can be said more full to your comfort? they had great sins, and many sins; but they are all obliterated, the remembrance of them is lost; they stand as clear in Gods account as if they had never done any thing to his just provocation.

5. This also is your security for the great day of judgment: and they that are sufficiently provided for that day are in an happy condition indeed: what makes it matter how things go with you in this world, if you are but sure that all shall go well then? here is the great and main concern of all the children of men, that they may be able to stand upright then, and have nothing to appal them. I know it is a solemn and serious thought which sensible souls are often chewing upon, and lay out many retired meditations in the enquiry after, to get some good assurance how their cause shall then go, when they shall come to stand before him that judgeth

judgeth the quick and the dead; and truly it is worth the while to be much and frequent in the consideration of, and endeavour to get satisfaction in this great question: and if you are such as have gotten Christs Righteousness to be yours, you have here a comfortable resolution of it: and let me assure you, that whatever you have formerly been or done, how much sin soever you are conscious of to your selves, yet if you have but made this one thing sure, that you are indeed gotten under Christs shadow, & have his perfect Righteousness to stand up and plead for you, it is abundantly safe to appear before God in that Righteousness: if you had all the personal Righteousness imaginable, were habitually as holy and righteous as our first Parents were, that hour wherein they came out of Gods hands, and had lived in the exercise of that grace, so as to have perfectly kept all Gods commandments, and not come short in one point of moral Obedience, nor chargeable with the least defect in your whole conversation, it could not stand you in greater stead, or afford you any more consolation: for there can be nothing at all alledged against you, how true soever the accusation may be in it self, but this Righteousness of Christ will fully answer to it all: for why? it is the Righteousness of God: God himself found

it out, prepared it, and appointed it for the help of poor sinners that believe in it: he who is God as well as man performed it in his own person, and thereby he gave infinite vertue unto it, so that as its worth can never be with any reason called in question or suspected; and God hath also given his approbation unto it, testifying that he is well-pleased in it, and hath accepted it for all those that Jesus Christ hath redeemed by it, and these are all those that do believe in his name; for as he hath promised it unto all those who so do, so this faith is a certain evidence that this Righteousness was fulfilled for them, and they shall have the benefit of it: either therefore Christ must be condemned, or else you must be justified in *the great day*: if he was perfectly righteous here *when* he was upon earth, then you shall be acknowledged and declared so to be, when you shall come to Judgment: and if this be the case with all those that have truly believed in the Son of God; then it will follow, that all *the* good which is laid up in the Covenant, and hath been purchased by his Righteousness, and perfect Obedience, even that glorious inheritance, and eternal Kingdom, the felicities whereof are here unutterable, shall all be assuredly yours. Let then the Redeemed ones of Jesus Christ Rejoice, and again I

say

A brief Discourse &c.

Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad; let nothing damp your spiritual rejoycing, or hinder your holy melody; let not any temporary changes make you to think your selves miserable, but looking over them all, account your selves to be everlastingly happy in him who is, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

FINIS.

